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ABSTRACT

Noting the increasing need for Head Start's efforts to support parents' personal and professional success, this guide for Head Start staff examines the success process at both the individual and the program level, and explores strategies that strengthen the larger community's support for families as they define and build upon success. Following an introductory section, the guide presents three training modules. Each module details expected outcomes, key concepts, background information, learning activities, and next steps. Handouts are included for each module. Module One, "Focusing on Success," provides skill-building in such areas as defining success for oneself, setting priorities, and moving toward goals. Module Two, "Working the Head Start Success Ladder," guides participants in an examination of what Head Start can do to assist individuals as they establish and pursue goals, in particular goals related to economic well-being. Module Three, "Building Success in the Community," expands the focus to the world beyond Head Start by examining the role Head Start plays in fostering a community where all members can achieve their personal visions of success. The final sections of the guide contain information on continuing professional development, and publication and organization resources. Three appendices describe Project Match and Economic Independence; a community framework for Head Start; and elements of federal welfare reform. (SD)

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HEAD START

ED 424 023

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

Building on Success

PS 027001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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HEAD START®

Building on Success

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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Preface

"I had lost sight of the fact that I was a person and that I could do things for myself. I didn't work and I didn't do anything to better myself. My self-esteem was about zero, but when I got involved with Head Start it got better." [1]

Head Start has a long and proud history of supporting parents' personal and professional success. In recent years, however, such efforts have taken on greater urgency. Shifting social circumstances have increased the challenges faced by low-income families. Workers with limited skills are having greater difficulty making a living wage. The forms of government assistance to families are changing, and parents are having to adapt to more challenging requirements for aid. More families are living far apart from relatives, and communities have become more fractured and disconnected. This means that parents have less support than before for childcare and other needs.

Head Start staff are in a unique position to support parents as they navigate through these challenging times. Staff have close relationships with the families they serve and are also informed about the resources and opportunities available in the larger community. In addition, Head Start as a program is in a unique position to support parents in their efforts to make a good life for themselves and their children. This is because Head Start brings parents together into a community where they can network together, encourage each other toward goals, and share strategies and successes.

Success is built upon success. Prior achievements form the foundation for new hopes and efforts. The title of this guide, *Building on Success*, reflects the concept of success as a continuous process of growth.

But how do parents use the Head Start experience to promote their own growth? Consider this observation: "One parent may begin the journey by... volunteering at a Head Start program for fifteen hours per week, another by attending a GED class..." [2] There is no one answer to the question, for each parent charts a unique path in the journey toward success.

In this guide, the success process is examined at both the individual and the program level. Therefore, it explores the skills, interests and goals that people have as well as the Head Start program practices that benefit them. Finally, the guide explores strategies that strengthen the larger community's support for families as they define and build upon success.

[1] "Parent Profile: Building Success Across the Generations." *Children and Families, The Magazine of the National Head Start Association*, Spring 1997.

[2] *Bridging the Worlds of Head Start and Welfare to Work*, Erickson Institute, 1993.

Introduction

Overview

Purpose

What is success? The dictionary defines it as:

> **success**: (1) the favorable or prosperous termination of attempts or endeavors (2) the attainment of wealth, position, honors, or the like (3) a successful performance or achievement: *The play was an instant success* (4) a thing or person that is successful: *She was a great success at the party*
>
> *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*

What is a successful life? It is a life of accumulated achievements. Think of it like a pyramid: early achievements, both personal and professional, lay the foundation for new, more ambitious goals. A successful life is built layer by layer. It is built with a combination of vision, perseverance, and hard work.

The parents who come to Head Start can already claim success in many areas of their lives. To name just one, they all have succeeded in enrolling their children in a program — Head Start — that will help their children develop social competence. Each parent also can look back on other successes that are unique to him or her. Each parent's hopes for the future are also unique. The activities in this guide, *Building on Success*, explore how Head Start supports parents as they define success for themselves and then strive toward it, goal by goal. Activities are based on five key principles:

1. Every parent has a right to a significant experience in Head Start. There are many ways that an experience can be significant. However, one important way is in how it helps parents move toward goals they define for themselves.

2. A person's definition of success changes over time, based on goals accomplished and new goals set.

3. Everyone builds a successful life in a unique way, depending on their talents, abilities, circumstances, and goals.

4. Everyone can benefit from support from the larger community to achieve success.

5. Head Start programs can play a key role in helping parents define success and move toward it. However, to do so requires thoughtful program planning and coordination. It also requires persistent effort over time.

Audience

The activities in this guide are designed for front-line staff who work closely with families, as well as for managers and program coordinators. Parents also should be included as partners in the activities, not only because they can directly benefit from the skill building but because their perspectives need to be heard in the activities which evaluate program practices.

Performance Standards

This guide contains activities to help programs meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards which require them to:

- Work with parents to identify family goals, strengths, and necessary services and supports.
- Offer opportunities for parents to develop timetables and strategies for achieving goals and to keep track of progress toward goals.
- Provide parents with involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents, both as individuals and as members of a group.
- Provide parents with opportunities to participate in the program as employees or volunteers.
- Provide parents with regular opportunities to work together, and with other community members, on activities that they have helped develop and in which they have expressed an interest.
- Support and encourage parents to influence the character and goals of community services in order to make them more responsive to their interests and needs.

Organization of the Guide

Building on Success contains guided activities for staff and parents to work through as peers. The three modules are aimed at different levels: personal, program, and community.

Module 1: Focusing on Success provides skill-building in such areas as defining success for oneself, setting priorities, and moving toward goals. By internalizing these skills, staff and parents can become better equipped to help others on their journeys toward success.

Module 2: Working the Head Start Success Ladder guides participants in an examination of what Head Start can do to assist individuals as they establish and pursue goals, in particular, goals related to economic well-being. Through the activities, participants will evaluate and recommend changes to program practices. Both staff and parents should be included in these activities because the perspectives of both are necessary to this process.

Module 3: Building Success in the Community expands the focus to the world beyond Head Start. Through module activities, participants will examine the role Head Start plays in fostering a community where all members can achieve their personal visions of success. Questions considered in this module include: How does Head Start link to other resources to facilitate success for individuals? How does Head Start work to make the larger community more supportive of all families' goal-seeking efforts? How does Head Start serve as a model? Again, the perspectives of both staff and parents are equally important to answering these questions.

Activities in this guide coordinate well with these other Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community: *Planning for Transitions: Communicating with Parents:* and *Family Partnerships: A Continuous Process.*

Organization of the Modules

In order to accommodate the needs of different grantees, each module offers two different delivery strategies: workshop and coaching.

- Workshops are designed for 10 or more participants. The workshop activities are ideally suited for groups of staff and parents who are working together on personal and program goals for success — goals that when realized enhance both the individual and the larger community.

- Coaching permits a smaller group of staff members and parents to work together under the guidance of a coach, who could be a Head Start director, coordinator, community volunteer, or an outside consultant. Coaching activities can be selected, tailored, and scheduled to meet the needs of individuals. They allow participants to advance skills that they will be using at Head Start or in other areas of their lives.

All modules contain the following sections:

- *Outcomes* summarizes the skills participants will learn in the module.

- *Key Concepts* describes the critical issues addressed.

Introduction

- *Background Information* provides a rationale for the module.
- *Activities* provides step-by-step instructions for workshop or coaching sessions.
- *Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice* contains suggestions for how participants can apply the information and skills learned in the training situation to their everyday lives.

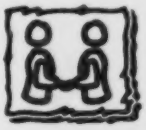
Overheads and handouts appear at the end of each module.

Ideally, participants should select a module and begin workshop or coaching activities based on their particular needs and goals for success — be they personal, program, or community focused. Activities in the module should then be used sequentially since they build upon one another.

If possible, allow participants to complete the modules over an extended period of time, perhaps a four- to six-month period. With *Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice* and *Continuing Professional Development*, training could extend into a year-long process.

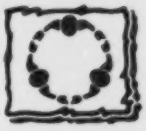
Definition of Icons

Coaching



A training strategy that fosters the development of skills through tailored instruction, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. The activities are written for a coach to work closely with one to three participants.

Workshops



A facilitated group training strategy that fosters the development of skills through activities which build on learning through group interaction. These activities are written for up to 25 participants working in small or large groups with one or two trainers.

Next Steps:
Ideas to Extend Practice

Activities assigned by the trainer immediately following the completion of the module to help participants review key information, practice skills, and examine their progress toward expected outcomes of the module.

Continuing
Professional Development

Follow-up activities for the program to support continued staff development in the regular use of the skills addressed in a particular training guide. It includes:

(1) Opportunities tailored to the participant to continue building on the skills learned in the training.

(2) Ways to identify new skills and knowledge needed to expand and/or complement these skills through opportunities in such areas as in higher education, credentialing, or community educational programs.

Introduction

At A Glance

Module	*Activity*	*Time*	*Materials*
Module 1: Focusing on Success	Activity 1-1: Success Is a Process (W)	20-30 minutes	Handout 1, Overhead 1, chart paper, pens or pencils, markers
	Activity 1-2: A Full Life (W)	40-45 minutes	Handout 2, chart paper, markers, pens or pencils (optional: thumbtacks, string, and board)
	Activity 1-3: Priority Pyramid (W)	varies	Handout 3, chart paper, markers, pens or pencils
	Activity 1-4: Short- and Long-Term Goal Setting (C)	45-60 minutes	Handout 4, pens or pencils
	Activity 1-5: Skills for Success (C)	45-60 minutes	Handout 5, pens or pencils
	Activity 1-6: Facing Challenges, Fully Informed (C)	60-75 minutes	Handout 6, pens or pencils

(W) = Workshop Activity

(C) = Coaching Activity

Module	Activity	Time	Materials
Module 2: Working The Head Start Success Ladder	Activity 2-1: Self-Help in the Head Start Community (C)	60-70 minutes	Handout 7, pens or pencils
	Activity 2-2: Personal Success Pathways (W)	30 minutes	Handout 8, chart paper, pens or pencils
	Activity 2-3: Building a Program Success Ladder (W)	30-45 minutes	Overheads 2-4, Handout 9, removable notes, thick point markers, chart paper
	Activity 2-4: Good Going — Keep Going! (C)	20-30 minutes	Handout 10, pens or pencils
	Activity 2-5: Program Strategies for Work Success (W)	45-60 minutes	Handout 11, chart paper, markers, pens or pencils
	Activity 2-6: Head Start as a Model of the Work World (C)	45-60 minutes	Handout 12, pens or pencils
	Activity 2-7: Program Challenges (W)	50-60 minutes	Handout 13, pens or pencils
Module 3: Building Success in the Community	Activity 3-1: Building Community Supports (W)	50-60 minutes	Overheads 5-6, Handout 14, pens or pencils, chart paper, markers
	Activity 3-2: Finding Shared Goals (W)	60-75 minutes	Handout 15, Handout 16, chart paper, markers, pens or pencils
	Activity 3-3: The Impact of Policies in Your Community (C)	60-75 minutes	Handout 17, pens or pencils
	Activity 3-4: Making Your Point of View Count (W)	varies	Handout 18, paper, pens or pencils
	Activity 3-5: Giving Back and Moving Forward (C)	50-60 minutes	Handout 19, chart paper, markers
	Activity 3-6: Program Checklist (W)	30-45 minutes	Handout 20, pens or pencils

(W) = Workshop Activity

(C) = Coaching Activity

Focusing on Success

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify success as an ongoing process.
- Use a variety of planning tools and strategies to chart a path toward goals.

Key Concepts

- Success is a process that involves many steps and many goals.
- Each person travels on a unique journey as they seek success in life.
- The foundation to success is self-knowledge: being aware of your strengths and your hopes.
- Setting priorities can help you clarify goals and develop a plan for reaching those goals.
- Goals can be reached by building upon existing skills and interests.
- To achieve a goal, it is important to have a clear sense of what the challenges will be and the resources you can draw on to face that challenge.

Background Information

Everyone wants success, but we all have different ideas of what that means. We each start in different places, set our sights on different goals, and use different means of moving toward them. A small accomplishment for one person might be a major achievement for another. The meaning of success really depends on the individual.

It is true for everyone, however, that the quest for success is never finished. Anyone who attains success has to work to hold onto it. Furthermore, the achievement of one goal usually reveals another. Likewise, a person can be successful in one area while still struggling in another. Thus, success involves a continuous striving toward goals. It is not an end result that is achieved. Rather, it is a continuous process of growth.

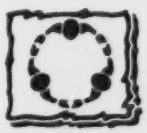
It is possible to fall into success, but more often it comes through conscious effort. You shape your future by taking the time to contemplate where you are, where you want to go, and the strengths and skills you can use to get there. Striving toward success often means setting priorities and identifying specific goals. It is necessary to prepare by thinking through the challenge involved in reaching a goal, in order to lessen surprise and reduce failure.

Module 1

In this module, participants will build skills in self-reflection, priority and goal setting, and preparing for challenges. Strength in these skills will enable participants not only to reach their own goals, but to better support others on their journeys toward success.

Also in this module, participants will consider the essential role that support from others plays in their own success. This support may come in different forms. For example, it may be encouragement from peers or it may be volunteer, learning, or work opportunities that enable one to acquire the skills and experiences needed to pursue a chosen goal. This focus on support lays the groundwork for Modules 2 and 3, which look at Head Start and community, respectively, in terms of how they support each individual's efforts to pursue a unique vision of success.

Activity 1-1: Success Is A Process



Purpose: This is an icebreaker activity which also sets the stage for the guide. Participants will explore the concept of success as a process rather than a single end-point.

Materials

Handout 1: *The Success Process*; Overhead 1: *Building on Success*; overhead projector; chart paper; markers; pens or pencils.

Process

Begin by welcoming participants to the training. Introduce "Building on Success" as the title and topic of the training. Then state that the first step in the process of "building on success" is to focus on what "success" means. Ask participants to share brief descriptions of successes they have had in the past.

Note that success is not handed to anyone. Ask one or two of the participants who volunteered previously to describe the process by which they achieved their successes. For example, someone whose success is learning how to swim, after years of being afraid of the water, might describe the mental effort and lessons involved. Write the following on chart paper:

Success is a process, not a destination.

Give each person Handout 1: *The Success Process* and tell them to use it for any note-taking during this activity. Explain that the quotation is from Iyanla Vanzant, a personal growth writer and lecturer. Ask participants to think about what success as a process means to them.

Allow about one minute for everyone to form their ideas. Then ask participants to share their reflections. They may offer such ideas as:

- A person's view of success changes over time.
- We all grow from one experience to another.
- It is important to be patient.
- Success comes with realistic goals.
- We need permission to fail and encouragement to keep trying.
- Success is made of small steps and victories along the way.

As each person shares a reflection, write the key idea on chart paper. Repeat each idea to make sure you are recording the sentiment expressed.

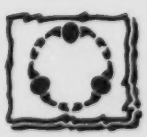
Debriefing

Ask participants to reflect on the following statements by using Overhead 1: *Building on Success:*

- Success is a process.
- This process requires an understanding of oneself and one's goals.
- Each person achieves success in a unique way.
- Attitude is important to success.
- Everyone needs support from others to achieve their goals.

As you discuss each point, bring forth examples from the group's discussion to illustrate them.

Activity 1-2: A Full Life



Purpose: Participants will draw pictures that represent elements that are important to a full life. They will use these pictures to discuss how to create greater balance and fulfillment in their individual lives.

Materials

Handout 2: *Life's Lines*; chart paper; markers; pens or pencils. (Optional: thumb tacks; string; cardboard)

Process

Begin by asking participants a single question:

What does it mean to have a full life?

Have participants share answers. Answers may include responses such as:

- Having family, friends, and loved ones
- Being able to do what you enjoy
- Contributing meaningfully to the community

Give participants ample time to reflect on this question. Make sure that everyone who wants to has an opportunity to respond.

State that everyone may have a different idea of a "full life," but there are some common themes. Ask participants to offer one-word descriptions of the elements that create a full life. They may say such things as:

- Health
- Wealth
- Love
- Wisdom

As a group, have them narrow down the list of words to four, such as the four above. Refer to these as the "elements" of a full life. Then pass out Handout 2: *Life's Lines.*

Explain that on Handout 2, participants should draw a shape (such as a square) that has one side for each element. The length of each side should reflect the amount of that particular element they have in their life now. Participants should label each side with the element it represents.

Let participants know that the lines of their shapes do not have to connect and that the lines do not have to be of equal length. The important thing is that each line stand for the amount of a particular element of success they feel they have now.

Variation: Instead of drawing, you may have participants use a piece of string tied into a circle, thumbtacks, and a piece of cardboard. Participants can show the elements of their lives by physically using these tools. As they talk with a partner about creating balance they could then move the tacks to demonstrate how a new strategy would affect their lives.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

When doing the handout, some participants may want to use words that are different from the ones the group has selected to describe the key elements in a full life. Allow them this freedom. However, make sure they draw a shape that has a number of sides equal to the number of words they choose to use.

Allow five minutes for each person to draw his or her shape, working individually. After everyone has completed their shape, have participants divide into pairs.

Direct participants to the second page of the handout which provides them with questions to use for discussing the shapes they drew and ideas they have for making their lives even more fulfilling.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

This activity easily adapts to a coaching setting. Simply reproduce Handout 2: *Life Lines* and have participants complete it and then discuss with a partner. Have them come back to you for debriefing.

Debriefing

Have participants take turns discussing their illustrations. Ask them whether drawing pictures of their lives helped them clarify any goals.

Make the following points:

- Each person builds a successful life in a unique way.
- To create a full life, we have to start with our own understanding of who we are and where we want to go.
- Support is essential. It is difficult if not impossible to achieve goals without involvement and support from others.

To conclude, have participants think of a single goal that, if accomplished, would help them achieve more fulfillment in life. Ask participants to keep their illustrations in a place where they will see them often, as a reminder of their goals.

Module 1

Activity 1-3:
Priority Pyramid

Purpose: In this activity, participants will practice a technique for setting priorities in planning life goals.

Materials

Handout 3: *Priority Pyramid*; chart paper; markers; pens or pencils.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

The social service guide *Family Partnerships: A Continuous Process*, particularly Module 2: *Family Goal Setting* and Module 3: *The Family Partnership Agreement*, should be used as background preparation and as a complementary resource for this activity.

Process

Begin the activity by asking participants:

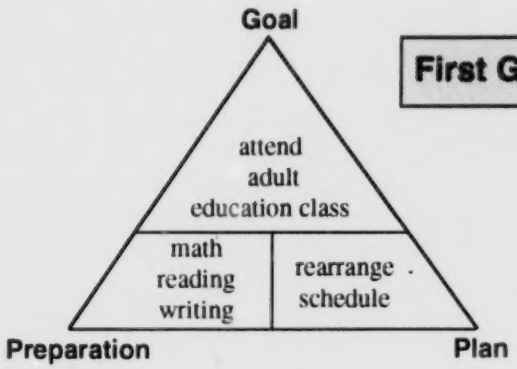
Why it is important to take time to think through our priorities as we set goals for the future?

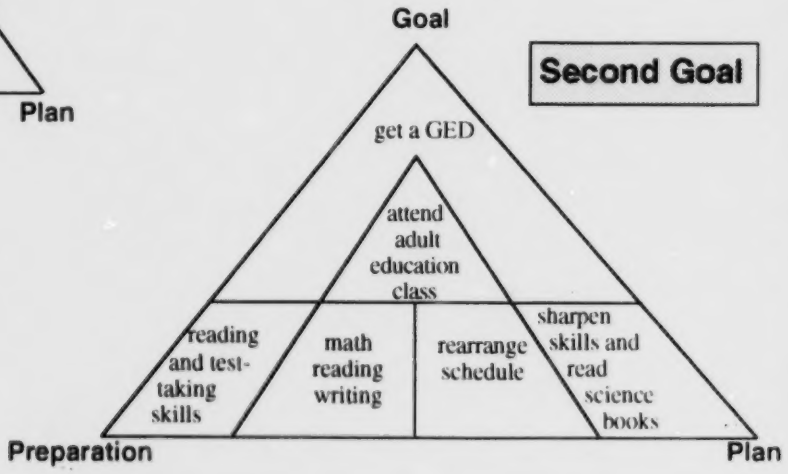
As participants share their ideas on the importance of priority setting, write the key points on chart paper. Ask them to keep these points in mind as they complete the task in this activity. Then divide participants into small groups of four to six. Using Handout 3: *Priority Pyramid* as a guide, tell participants to begin by discussing the meaning of the words "goal," "preparation," and "plan." After that, direct each participant to do the following:

- Identify one goal
- Describe how he or she is already prepared (in terms of skills, knowledge, motivation, etc.) to achieve the goal
- Make a plan to achieve the goal

Encourage participants to write down their ideas wherever they like on the pyramid (inside or out). Allow 25-30 minutes for participants to complete their pyramids and then to share ideas in their small groups.

Pyramid Example for Debriefing Section of Activity 1-3





Debriefing

Ask participants for their insights on the role of setting priority in planning for success. Have them give examples of what they mean based on their own pyramids.

Ask participants how setting one goal, making one plan, and achieving one goal can help a person accomplish other goals later in life. Use the example below of becoming a licensed practical nurse (LPN). Draw each layer of the pyramid in turn, one over the next, as illustrated on the previous page.

End the session by noting that the preparation and planning we use to accomplish one goal becomes a base that supports the accomplishment of other, increasingly challenging goals.

Activity 1-4: Short- and Long-Term Goal Setting

Purpose: Participants will practice goal-setting techniques.

Materials

Handout 4: *Short- and Long-Term Goal Setting*; pens and pencils.

Process

Ask participants to shut their eyes and visualize themselves as they hope to become. First ask them to visualize themselves in one week. Allow a few minutes for this. Then ask them to visualize themselves next month. Again, allow a few minutes. Then ask them to visualize themselves next year.

Discuss the importance of visualizing in setting and reaching goals. Then inform participants that they will be asked to practice short- and long-term goal setting once a week for the next several weeks. Explain that at the end of this period, you will meet with them again to evaluate whether any of the goal- setting techniques introduced in this activity worked for them.

Give participants four copies each of Handout 4: *Short- and Long-Term Goal Setting*. Review the instructions and have them begin their first goal-setting effort.

Coach Preparation Notes:

Pair off participants to help them remember to renew goal setting at the beginning of each of the next three weeks. Make partners responsible for giving reminders to each other.

Debriefing

Have participants describe how they felt about the experience of setting goals. Explore whether they found making a set of goals a chore or enjoyable. Find out which techniques participants found useful, if any, or if they developed other techniques of their own. You may want to ask such questions as:

- How often did you think about your goals?
- What did you accomplish, or at least get started on?
- If you accomplished one of your goals, how did it feel?
- If you carried over goals from one week to the next, how did you feel about doing that?
- How did your goals change over the four weeks?
- If these techniques did not work for you, what ideas do you have for techniques you could use to help you think about your future, set goals, and stay focused on them?

Activity 1-5: Skills for Success

Purpose: Participants will deepen their understanding of the skills and abilities they enjoy using and the ones they would like to develop further.

Materials

Handout 5: *Ability Inventory*; pens or pencils.

Process

Set the tone for the session by stating that everyone has skills and abilities that enable him or her to move forward toward ever- expanding opportunities. Then explain that in this activity, participants will explore their unique skills for success and identify the ones they want to develop further.

Pass out Handout 5: *Ability Inventory*. Ask participants to begin by reading through the directions to Part A: Brainstorming. Explain that they are to list on the handout the things they truly enjoy doing and to leave out any tasks that do not bring them some degree of pleasure.

Provide examples of activities that many people enjoy doing and the skills involved, for example:

shopping — purchasing, comparing

watching movies — observing, listening

Allow approximately five minutes for participants to brainstorm. Next, tell participants that many people have trouble recognizing all of their natural abilities so, working with a partner, they will be going through a list of enjoyable tasks to see if they can recognize other abilities they have which they overlooked in their initial brainstorming. Assign partners for this task.

Direct participants to Part B of the handout. Explain that this is an inventory of abilities, divided into three categories:

- Working with people
- Working with your hands
- Working with information

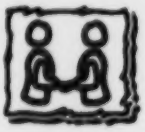
Direct pairs to work together to have each partner complete the inventory. The pairs should then discuss the questions in Part C of the handout.

Debriefing

Have participants share their reactions to taking the ability inventory. Ask each of them to describe at least one thing they hope to see themselves doing in the future. Next ask them if this is a skill they could develop further through volunteer work or a home business, in their current job, or on their own.

End by asking participants to describe the kinds of support they might need from Head Start, family, friends, or community to accomplish this goal.

Activity 1-6: Facing Challenges, Fully Informed



Purpose: Participants will work through the questions that, when answered, can better prepare them for success in any challenge they are taking on.

Materials

Handout 6: *Facing Challenges, Fully Informed*; pens or pencils.

Process

Begin with a discussion of the many transitions Head Start parents make as they seek to improve their lives and that of their families. Such transitions might include:

- Moving from unemployment to a part-time job
- Moving to a better paying job
- Moving out of a shelter into a subsidized apartment
- Moving away from an abusive relationship
- Moving from nonparticipation to classroom volunteer
- Moving from food service volunteer to Policy Council member

Have participants describe other transitions they have observed parents making at Head Start. Remind participants that even minor transitions can be significant for the person involved. As an example, describe a parent who walks her child to class and sometimes stays to volunteer in the class when asked by the teacher. It may be a significant step for this parent to commit in advance to a volunteer schedule.

Then discuss how when people take on new challenges, they do not always succeed at first. Success may take a long time or involve repeated failures and new attempts. Have participants reflect on their own experiences where they did not succeed in their first attempt at a goal. Ask for reasons why this happened. Among other answers, participants will probably say something like, "I didn't know what I was getting into." Use this opening to underscore the importance of knowing what to expect in a new situation. Such knowledge can tell a person whether it is the right step to take at this point in time. It also can help identify the support he or she will need to make that step.

Ask participants to think about a new challenge that they are considering for themselves. (If they cannot think of any, have them think about something they have dreamed of doing — for example, learning how to arrange

flowers, or going back to school for a degree.) Distribute Handout 6: *Facing Challenges, Fully Informed* and have them use it to analyze their challenge. You can facilitate them through the handout or you can ask them to complete it on their own. As a third option, participants can work in pairs, taking turns to help the other go through the list of questions.

Debriefing

Have participants describe their reactions to the exercise. Then ask:

- Did these questions help you prepare for your challenge?
- What do you need to find out before you begin?
- Who might be able to answer any questions that you have?

Help participants make a plan to resolve any outstanding questions they have so that they can move toward their goal.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

- Have participants make collages, posters, or some other kind of artistic display of what they can do and what they want to do. Have them display their artwork in a prominent place at home (such as on the refrigerator or a mirror) as a reminder of the skills they are using to reach their goals.
- Put together a collection of motivational books and articles available for parents to borrow. Or, create a bulletin board picture display of individuals who have achieved goals. See the Resources section for ideas on materials.
- Have staff and parents think about new ways to celebrate successes and to make progress and growth more visible at the center. For example, dedicate a "Wall of Success" for posting achievements (i.e., passing a GED or typing test, starting a class or entering a training program, completing a resume or supporting someone else's success).

Overhead 1: Building On Success

Success is a process.

This process requires an understanding of oneself and one's goals.

Each person achieves success in a unique way.

Attitude is important to success.

Everyone needs support from others to achieve their goals.

Handout 1: The Success Process

"Success is a process, not a destination."

Iyanla Vanzant

My reflections:

Handout 2: Life's Lines

Instructions: Write your elements of a full life here:

Now, draw a shape that has one line for each element. It may be a square or any other four-sided shape. As you draw, think about what makes each line longer or shorter for you. Label each line with the element it represents.

Handout 2: Life's Lines (Continued)

1. Talk with your partner about your shape and what each line represents. Talk about which lines are longer, which are shorter, and what this means to you.

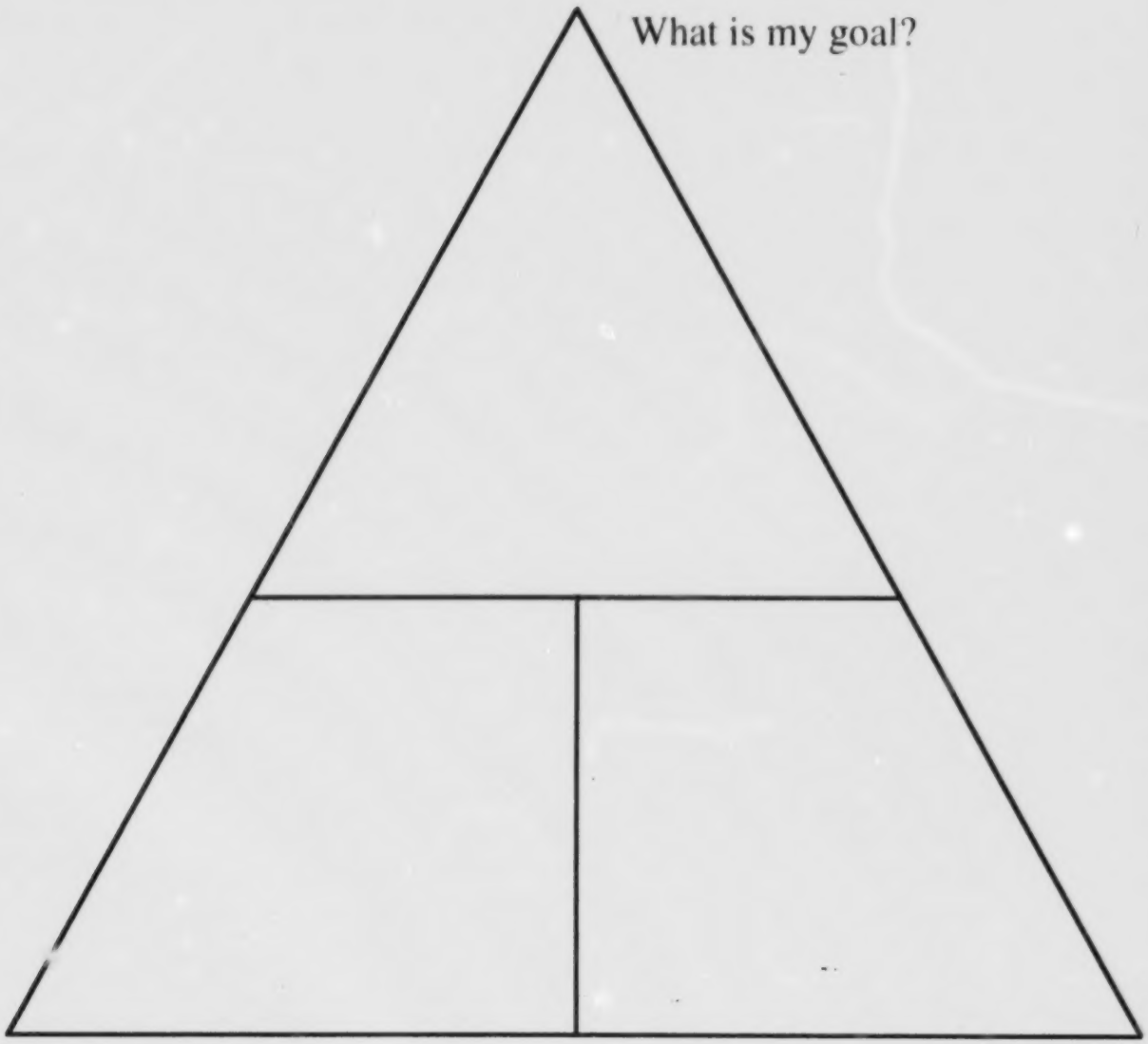
2. Does your shape reflect a full life?

3. Is there a relationship between the sides to your shape? That is, does the length of one have anything to do with the lengths of the others? Explain.

4. What can you do to lengthen one or more sides of your shape? That is, how could you make your life more fulfilling in those dimensions?

Handout 3: Priority Pyramid

Instructions: Identify one goal you would like to achieve. Then think about how you are already prepared to achieve that goal. Next, think about plans you need to make to achieve your goal.



How am I already prepared (in terms of skills, knowledge, motivation, etc.) to achieve the goal?

What is my plan for reaching the goal?

Handout 4: Short- and Long-Term Goal Setting

Instructions: Use four copies of this handout. Take one copy and write in the date. Then, for each category below, set a goal. Here are four different ways you can do this:

1. Write down what you want to get done.
2. Tell someone what you hope to do.
3. Shut your eyes and picture yourself accomplishing the goal.
4. Sketch a picture of yourself having reached your goal.

Use any or all methods — *whatever works for you!*

At the beginning of the next week, set goals again using a new copy of the handout. You may carry goals over from the previous week if they are still things you would like to do.

DATE:_____ **WEEK (circle) 1 2 3 4**

My goal for this week:

My goal for this month:

My goal for this year:

When I reach the end of my years and look back at my life, what accomplishments would I like to see?

Handout 5: Ability Inventory

Part A:Brainstorming

Instructions: On the left, list things you enjoy doing. On the right, list specific skills that you have as a result of that activity. An example has been provided.

Things I enjoy doing	Specific skills
making furniture	assembly, repair

Part B: Inventory

Instructions: Complete the inventory that begins on the next page by putting a check (✔) next to the skills you currently do, enjoy doing, or want to develop further. You may complete the inventory working by yourself or with a partner.

Part C: Summary

Instructions: Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. In which area did you find you have the most abilities you want to develop further?

2. In that area, what work or hobby do you see yourself doing in the future?

3. How can others be of assistance to you as your work toward your goals?

4. How are your partner's goals similar or different from your own? Are there ways you can support each other as you work toward your goals?

Handout 5: Ability Inventory (Continued)

Working with people	Currently do	Enjoy doing	Want to develop further
advocating			
counseling			
decision making			
discussing			
entertaining			
fund raising			
giving feedback			
interviewing			
listening			
organizing groups			
persuading			
planning			
problem solving			
recruiting			
scheduling			
teaching			
teamwork			
training			
tutoring			
using the telephone			

Are there any other "people" skills you use, enjoy, or want to develop further?

Handout 5: Ability Inventory (Continued)

Working with your hands	Currently do	Enjoy doing	Want to develop further
assembling			
comparing			
cooking			
decorating			
designing			
drawing			
experimenting			
filing			
making repairs			
measuring			
playing an instrument/sport			
purchasing			
styling hair			
tending animals			
tending machines			
tending plants			
using movement/dance			
using tools			
using voice			
writing			

Are there any other "working with your hands" skills that you use, enjoy, or want to develop further?

Handout 5: Ability Inventory (Continued)

Working with information	Currently do	Enjoy doing	Want to develop further
abstracting			
adding - subtracting			
analyzing			
budgeting			
checking			
coding			
compiling data			
designing			
developing ideas			
editing/writing			
estimating			
gathering information			
giving directions			
graphing			
informing			
reading			
record keeping			
reporting			
summarizing			

Are there any other "information" skills that you use, enjoy, or want to develop further?

Handout 6: Facing Challenges, Fully Informed

Instructions: This exercise can help you prepare mentally for any new challenge you plan to take on. Describe your new challenge in the box below. Then read and think about each of the questions that follow. (Put a line through any questions that do not relate to your situation.)

Your new challenge:

General Questions	**Do you know the answer? (yes or no)**	**If no, who could help you answer it?**
Why are you thinking about doing this?		
What will it be like, day to day?		
Who do you know who has done this before? How did they like it?		
What do you expect to like *most* about this?		
What do you expect to like *least* about this?		
How will you cope with the parts you like least?		
What will keep you motivated when the going gets tough?		
What if you don't like it?		
What skills are required?		
What new skills will you learn?		
What opportunities could this lead to?		
Time Questions		
What time commitment is involved?		
How will it affect your daily schedule?		
Will you need extra time in your day? If yes, how will you find the time?		

Continued on next page

Handout 6: Facing Challenges, Fully Informed (Continued)

Money Questions	Do you know the answer? (yes or no)	If no, who could help you answer it?
Does it pay? If yes, how much and what will you do with the money?		
Does it cost? If yes, how much and how will you afford it?		
Are there benefits? If yes, what are they?		
How will it affect any financial support you now receive?		
How will it affect your daily expenses?		
People Questions		
What new people will this put you in contact with?		
How do you think you will get along with them?		
How will your family be affected?		
How will your friends react?		
Personal Questions		
Will you have to behave any differently than you do now?		
How will it affect the level of stress in your life?		
How will it affect your health?		
Who will you be able to go to if you have a problem?		
Who could be your "buddy" to support, coach, and cheerlead you through this new challenge?		

Continued on next page

Handout 6: Facing Challenges, Fully Informed (Continued)

Work or Volunteer Questions	Do you know the answer? (yes or no)	If no, who could help you answer it?
Who will you report to?		
Will your performance be reviewed? If yes, when?		
Is there a dress code? If yes, what is it?		
Other Questions (add your own here, too)		
How will it affect your living arrangements?		
How will it affect your transportation arrangements?		
How will it affect your childcare arrangements?		

Working the Head Start Success Ladder

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Evaluate their Head Start program in terms of the opportunities provided for parents to identify and pursue goals.
- Identify ways that their Head Start program can enhance opportunities for parents to find meaningful work and other supports for themselves and their families.

Key Concepts

- Everyone has skills and interests that they have developed in one context — such as parenting or involvement with Head Start — that can be applied in the pursuit of other goals.
- Head Start programs provide many opportunities for parents to set their own goals and move toward them.
- Head Start programs are particularly well-suited to helping parents define and move toward goals related to economic well- being.
- This role is increasingly important in light of social changes affecting support for families.
- Through conscious planning, Head Start programs can enhance the number and range of opportunities parents have for establishing and achieving goals.

Background Information[1]

For over 30 years Head Start programs have provided a foundation on which staff and parents could work together to build success for low-income families. Now Head Start programs are looking to expand their base of support to families exploring new or better work options. This has become a critically important role for Head Start because of today's economic environment, in which families are expected to be "self-sufficient" yet face many challenges on the road to economic well-being.

[1] Many of the activities in this module were developed in conjunction with Project Match, a research and service welfare- to-work program in Chicago which has links with local Head Start programs to adapt its model to a Head Start setting. Facilitators may want to refer to the Project Match ladder diagram included in this guide as Appendix A. RMC Research would like to thank Toby Herr for her assistance with reviewing this module.

Module 2

In this module, *Working the Head Start Success Ladder*, participants will explore how programs support parents as they pursue economic goals. The module uses a metaphor of Head Start as a "success ladder." This metaphor is used because:

- It shows how goals are often reached through a series of small steps.
- Ladders are mobile supports that can be easily moved or adjusted based upon the needs of the individual.

There are two main reasons that Head Start is so ideally suited to help parents move toward goals that involve financial independence and work. The first is that Head Start programs by nature are supportive and family-like — they are a safe place to take on new challenges. The second reason is that Head Start provides parents with an opportunity to acquire and demonstrate skills they will need to succeed in the work world. For example, when parents get their children to Head Start on time, they demonstrate an ability to be punctual at work. As another example, when parents work on committees at Head Start, they acquire experiences for the teamwork expected of business employees.

There are several things that Head Start programs can do to strengthen how well they serve as a ladder for parents' success:

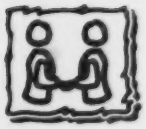
- They can consciously define their purpose to include helping parents progress toward goals that involve economic well-being and career satisfaction.
- They can identify activities that form a "success ladder" — that is, a hierarchy of parent activities that demand gradually increasing amounts of time, effort, and ability.
- They can identify ways that each individual parent can gain the skills, confidence, experience, and other ingredients they need to advance themselves financially and in work.
- They can promote the expectation that *every* Head Start parent can climb onto the ladder and keep climbing.
- They can establish ways to support and celebrate the incremental gains that individuals make — to help individuals stay on course and keep trying.
- They can develop means for helping individuals move from one goal to the next.

- They can make a commitment of long-term support, both tangible and moral, to parents who climb the ladder.

To work as a "success ladder," a Head Start program must provide appropriate first steps for every person. Some rungs need to be low to the ground, but the top of the ladder should reach high to the sky. The rungs in between need to be spaced sufficiently close together so that a person can step from one to the next. Finally, there needs to be a variety of activities at each level, as if there were not one ladder but several ladders side by side.

Module 2 begins by having participants look at the ways that individual parents have made use of their involvement with Head Start to help them build economic well-being and improve their work situations. Next, participants construct a series of ladders that reflect specific opportunities available within their local Head Start program for parents to build skills and realize successes. Participants then explore how to expand program practices that support families as they pursue economic goals.

Activity 2-1: Self-Help in the Head Start Community



Purpose: Participants will examine the supportive role Head Start plays as individuals engage in their own unique process of self-help.

Materials

Handout 7: *Self-Help Cycle*; pens or pencils.

Process

Explain to participants that in this activity they will have an opportunity to think about two important dynamics of success:

- Each person's unique process toward success
- The supports that they receive from others in the Head Start community

Distribute Handout 7: *Self-Help Cycle*. Direct them to Part A and together read through and discuss briefly each of the four stages:

- Self Determination
- Self Empowerment

- Self Reliance
- Self Sufficiency

Ask participants the following questions to help further the discussion:

- Have you ever gone through a similar process or cycle of self-development?
- Were there people who supported you along the way?
- Have you supported others in their own process of self- development?

Next, ask participants to choose one of the three stories (Part B) in Handout 7. Have them keep in mind their own personal experiences as they read through and analyze the story they selected. Emphasize that it is important to be aware of one's own experience of support as one seeks to support others in the Head Start community.

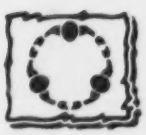
Debriefing

Ask participants what they learned from this activity:

- About personal processes
- About Head Start's supportive role
- About their own role supporting others

Conclude by asking participants to consider how their awareness of the "Self-Help Cycle" will affect their work with parents in the future.

Activity2-2: Personal Success Pathways



Purpose: Participants will examine the role Head Start plays in supporting parents as they pursue success.

Materials

Handout 8: *Pathways to Success*; chart paper; pens or pencils.

Process

Ask participants to think about a specific Head Start parent whom they have known over the past few years. Ask them to think about how this person grew (personally, professionally, and in other ways) during and after their involvement with Head Start.

Next, explain that each of these people followed a unique "success pathway" that Head Start was or may still be part of, and that they will be drawing a picture of these pathways.

Divide into smaller groups of four to five people each. Pass out Handout 8: *Pathways to Success.* Read through the directions and provide time for people to review the samples. See if there are any questions. Encourage each group to draw only one pathway. Allow 15 minutes for the groups to complete their drawing.

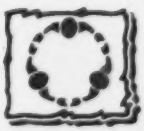
After the groups have finished, reconvene the large group and ask one person from each group to describe the pathway they drew in detail.

Process

Ask participants the following:

- What are some similarities they see in people's pathways? (For example, people tried a number of things before they found something that worked for them.)
- What are some of the differences?
- What did you observe about the role that Head Start played in this person's success pathway?

Activity 2-3: Building A Program Success Ladder



Purpose: Participants will construct a "success ladder." This is a physical representation of the activities that parents can engage in, both through Head Start and the broader community, which allow them to determine and pursue work-related goals. Participants will use this image to analyze their own program's effectiveness as a "success ladder."

Materials

Overheads 2-4: *Building A Success Ladder*; Handout 9: *Building A Success Ladder*; overhead projector; 3" x 5" self-stick removable notes (such as Post-It® notes); thick-point markers; chart paper prepared to resemble the diagram on page 1 of Handout 9.

Process

Display Overhead 2: *Building A Success Ladder:*

How can parents build skills at Head Start?

Facilitate a brief discussion on this question. Sum up the discussion with the points on Overhead 3:

- An important role of Head Start is to provide opportunities for parents to develop skills and acquire experience.
- In order to serve all parents, Head Start must offer a broad range of skill-building opportunities.
- Parents who have these opportunities are better prepared to find employment or to move into employment that better meets their needs.
- Head Start's role in supporting skills development is critically important in light of welfare reform and other changes that affect families.

Distribute to each person five self-stick removable notes ("Post-Its®). Ask them to number these notes from 1 to 5. Then distribute Handout 9: *Building A Success Ladder.* Explain that in this activity, participants will construct a diagram of the different opportunities Head Start provides for parents to develop skills and acquire experience — either directly or through other community resources with which Head Start networks. Page 1 of the handout shows a sample "success ladder."

Explain that the "success ladder" actually is five connected ladders. Each ladder represents a category of activities that enable parents to develop skills and acquire experience:

1. Child-centered activities
2. Volunteer activities
3. Employment activities
4. Education and training activities
5. Self-improvement activities

Within each category, activities can be organized into levels based on the amount of skill, time, and/or effort required.

Draw attention to the employment category. It is in the middle of the "success ladder." This reflects the central importance of employment to family stability and well-being. Also, the skills and experience parents develop through activities in the other four categories can lead into this central category, that is, into new or better employment.

Next, direct participants' attention to the first category and read out loud the three examples which appear on page 2 of the handout:

1. Child-centered activities.

Entry rung example:
Bring child to school on time each day.

Middle rung example:
Take part in a library program with their child each Saturday.

Upper rung example:
Coach soccer for neighborhood children.

Note: These examples are different from those which appear on the sample ladder, in order to broaden participants' understanding of the ladder concept.

Ask participants to think of additional ways that parents participate in activities with children. These activities can take place at Head Start or in other organizations with which Head Start networks. Or, they may be activities for which Head Start provides encouragement and support. Direct participants to consider both working and at-home parents, and parents who can attend functions at Head Start as well as those who would have difficulty making it into the center.

After participants have had a few minutes for reflection, ask one-third of the participants (such as those on the left side of the room) to write down one entry-rung idea on the note marked #1. Ask another third to write down a middle-rung idea, and the remaining third to write down an upper-rung idea. Have participants use thick-tip markers and large clear print so that all can read when the notes are displayed.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Have available extra self-stick removable notes because some participants may want to redo their responses.

When everyone is finished, ask for volunteers to read responses. Then collect all responses and keep them in a distinct pile.

Repeat this procedure for the remaining four categories:

2. **Volunteer activities**

Entry rung example:
Volunteer on a drop-in basis in child's classroom.

Middle rung example:
Volunteer from home a few hours each week, translating program materials.

Upper rung example:
Volunteer often (15+ hours or more) in older child's elementary school.

3. **Employment**

Entry rung example:
Work on-call as a Head Start aide.

Middle rung example:
Participate in a work program that pays a stipend and leads to a Child Development Associate credential.

Upper rung example:
Obtain a permanent full-time position with salary and benefits.

4. **Education/training activities**

Entry rung example:
Attend a weekly literacy class.

Middle rung example:
Take a home-study course (10-20 hours per week).

Upper rung example:
Attend college or vocational training (20 hours or more per week).

5. **Self-improvement activities**

Entry rung example:
Get a library card.

Middle rung example:
Attend weekly book discussions.

Upper rung example:
Keep a journal.

Next, divide participants into five groups. Give each group a pile of notes corresponding to one of the five categories. Ask each group to sort its notes into a ladder, from easiest to hardest activities. Define "easiest" as "little skill, time, or effort required" and "hardest" as "maximum skill, time, or effort required."

Trainer Preparation Notes:

There is no one correct order for their ladders, so do not permit participants to spend more than 10 minutes sorting their notes.

While participants are working in their small groups, post a piece of chart paper prepared according to the diagram in Handout 9.

Debriefing

Have a volunteer from each group come to the front and place the group's notes into a ladder on the chart paper.

Discuss how the set of ladders creates one large "ladder to success." Individuals can move straight up, sideways, or up, down, and up again as they build on their own successes.

Ask participants to take a few minutes to reflect on the ladder they have created. Then pose the following questions for discussion:

- How are the various rungs connected to work skills?
- Are there any rungs missing?
- Are the lowest rungs of the ladder close enough to the ground for parents to climb on?
- What opportunities does the program provide for parents who are on middle and upper rungs to climb even higher?
- Is this ladder adequate to support all parents to climb onto it?
- How can Head Start programs link parents to other community resources which offer opportunities for building skills and developing experience?

Review the concept that for Head Start to work as a "success ladder," it must provide starting rungs that are appropriate for each person, whatever

his or her present skills and abilities. The ladder also must have reasonable distances between rungs, and it must allow for significant upward movement.

Demonstrate how the ladder works by creating a scenario of an individual who moves from the bottom rungs of the ladder and up. (You may ask a volunteer to do this.)

Conclude by reviewing the points in Overhead 4, which lists the key steps by which programs can "build a ladder to success":

1. Define your program's purpose to include helping parents identify and pursue work-related goals.

2. Identify parent activities that form a "success ladder." *This step has been started with this activity, but participants may choose to develop a more thorough and formal "success ladder" that can be used as a working tool in their program.*

3. Refer to this ladder to identify ways that individual parents can advance themselves.

4. Promote the expectation that every Head Start parent can "climb onto the ladder" and keep climbing.

5. Establish ways to support and celebrate the incremental gains that individuals make. *This step is the subject of the next workshop activity.*

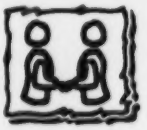
6. Develop ways to help people deal with change.

7. Make a commitment of long-term support to parents as they progress toward their goals.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Leave the ladder up for the next activity in this module.

Activity 2-4: Good Going— Keep Going!



Purpose: Participants will look at how their program can provide ongoing support and encouragement to parents as they pursue work-related challenges.

Materials

Handout 10: *Good Going — Keep Going!*; pens or pencils.

Process

Explain that everyone needs encouragement when they are trying to do something they have never done before. Head Start staff can positively influence the work-related achievements of parents by validating and supporting their efforts each step of the way. Emphasize that programs that are successful in assisting people reach their goals provide immediate, positive, and ongoing support and encouragement.

Ask participants to think about someone at Head Start who has recently achieved a work-related success (for example, a staff person who got a promotion, a parent who received the LPN license). Ask, how was this success celebrated and recognized? How will that recognition affect the person's ability to move on to the next success?

Distribute Handout 10: *Good Going — Keep Going!* Read through the directions together. Encourage participants to make sure to think both of things that the program *does* and things that it *could do* to encourage or support parents. Review the example on Handout 10.

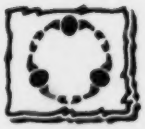
Debriefing

Have the participants share highlights from their ideas. Then ask the following questions:

- How can the program encourage all parents to keep moving toward work-related goals?
- How can the program help those who fall away from their goals?
- How can the program help those who are "stuck"?
- How can the program ensure that it is giving positive support to everyone on a frequent basis (at least weekly)?
- Which staff members are responsible for supporting and encouraging parents? (The correct answer, of course, is *all* staff members.)

- Why should staff members consider this an important part of their jobs?
- How do staff members benefit by being "cheerleaders and coaches" to parents?

Activity 2-5: Program Strategies for Work Success



Purpose: Participants will examine promising practices that support the work development goals of parents. They will then evaluate which strategies would adapt well to their particular Head Start setting.

Materials

Handout 11: *Work Success Strategies*; five sets of chart paper; five markers.

Process

Trainer Preparation Notes:

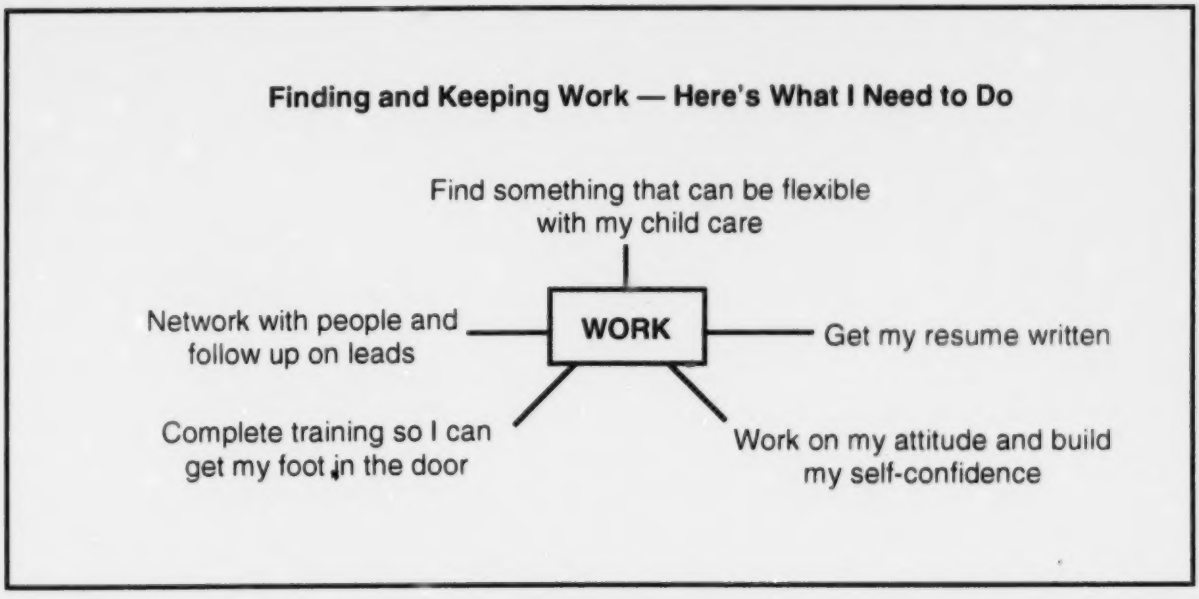
Have the room set up to accommodate five small discussion groups. Participants will form into groups approximately 20 minutes into the workshop. Also, prepare on chart paper the questions that appear on page 48.

Begin the discussion by writing the phrase "WORK" in the middle of a piece of chart paper. Ask participants what this word means to them.

Participants may joke that it is "a four-letter word" or respond that having a job and getting paid are modern day necessities, etc. Allow about five minutes for open discussion.

Next, say that you want them to put themselves in the role of someone who is having difficulty finding or maintaining work. Note that some of them may have experienced or now be experiencing a challenge with finding and keeping work. Emphasize that if they have not been there personally, they know someone who has and to just try to look at things from that person's point of view for a moment.

Return to the chart paper and write the following phrase across the top: *Finding and keeping work — Here's what I need to do* (See diagram at the top of the next page):


Finding and Keeping Work — Here's What I Need to Do
Find something that can be flexible with my child care
Network with people and follow up on leads
WORK
Get my resume written
Complete training so I can get my foot in the door
Work on my attitude and build my self-confidence

Ask participants to respond to this prompt in a way that is honest without placing blame. It may be helpful to use a few examples from the illustration above to get people started. Allow about 10 minutes for people to form and share their responses.

Distribute Handout 11: *Work Success Strategies.* Spend some time looking at four strategies that programs have used to help people find and maintain a job or build their skills and talents to enter into more rewarding work. The goal is to see how any of these ideas could be implemented at participants' Head Start programs. The four strategies described in Handout 11 are:

- Resume Development
- Job Development
- Mentoring
- Small Business Development

After participants have reviewed the four strategies, explain that they will work in small groups to discuss one strategy or to develop an alternative strategy. Explain that alternative strategies should target the needs of specific individuals in their Head Start programs. The last page of Handout 11 can be used by any small group that chooses to develop and discuss an alternative strategy.

Before participants break into small groups, have them review the questions they will be addressing (which you have prepared ahead of time on chart paper):

- What interests you about this strategy?
- Is this a strategy we use in our Head Start Program?
- If so, how is it working? Can it be improved? How can we develop more support for this strategy from the program and community?
- Who would need to be involved to implement this strategy effectively?
- What three steps would you take to begin the process of implementing this strategy? Who would be responsible for each step?

Have participants decide on a strategy to discuss, from either the four presented in Handout 11 or an alternative strategy. Assign an area of the room for each strategy and direct participants to move into small groups. Make sure there are chart paper and markers for each small group.

Have each group assign someone to record and someone to report. Answer any questions participants have about their task, and then direct them to begin. Allow 20 minutes for group discussion.

Debriefing

Have each group take 3-4 minutes to share their ideas. After each group has summarized their discussions, encourage them to continue to talk and plan. Emphasize that whatever they decide to promote, their approach must find a good fit within the Head Start program. It also must be well developed and include ample community and business support along with clearly defined staff roles.

Should you be continuing the training, the next workshop activity provides participants with practice working through the challenges of implementing work entry efforts.

Activity 2-6: Head Start as a Model of the Work World

Purpose: Participants will identify the kinds of work-like demands that can be modeled within Head Start, to provide parents with experiences they can use to reach work-related goals.

Materials

Handout 12: *Characteristics of the Work World*; pens or pencils.

Process

Head Start programs can assist parents who wish to move "up the ladder" into employment or into higher levels of employment, by providing work-like opportunities for those parents. In this activity, participants will think about the ways that their program can encourage and model work-like demands so that parents can practice and acquire the skills they need to advance in employment.

Review with participants Handout 12: *Characteristics of the Work World*. Discuss and have them write down any additional characteristics not included in the list. For example, other characteristics they may suggest are:

- You are expected to get along with co-workers.
- You will have to problem-solve and use initiative.

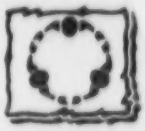
Then have participants complete page 2 of the handout in order to think through ways that the program offers opportunities to parents to experience a work-like setting.

Debriefing

Review participants' answers to the handout questions. Then ask the following questions:

- Overall, would you say the Head Start program provides opportunities for parents to gain work-like experience?
- How does Head Start model the work world?
- What else could Head Start be doing to increase opportunities for parents to experience a work-like setting?
- How can the Head Start program tailor work-like demands to the capacities of individual parents? In other words, how can the program know if it is expecting too much or too little from each parent?

Activity 2-7: Program Challenges



Purpose: Participants will examine several special Head Start programs designed to assist parents with entry into the workforce. The purpose is to provide participants with practice in resolving some of the challenges they may face in implementing such programs.

Materials

Handout 13: *Program Challenges*; pens or pencils.

Process

Begin the activity by dividing participants into three groups. Let each group know that it will be analyzing actual Head Start efforts to support parents seeking new or better employment. Each group will read about an innovative program and the challenges that it faces in fully realizing its goals. They will then brainstorm on approaches the program could use to overcome hurdles and continue to build success.

Distribute Handout 13: *Program Challenges*. Assign each group one of the three scenarios to discuss. Have each group select someone to write down group members' responses during the discussion and someone to report the group's scenario and their reflections on it.

Allow the groups 15 to 20 minutes to complete their work.

Debriefing

Reconvene the large group and have each reporter summarize the scenario discussed by his or her group and its key recommendations.

Follow with a discussion of the various activities local Head Start programs are doing to support parents seeking new or better employment. Ask:

- What ideas do you have for making these efforts even more successful?
- How can we begin to implement these ideas?

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

- Use the "self-help cycle" from Handout 7 as a guide for writing or illustrating the success story of a person in the Head Start community. Share this story by displaying it in a prominent location.
- Use the policy council training video "Linking Our Voices" to lead into a staff discussion on how parents are an integral part of Head Start program success. Discuss the point that when individuals build upon success, they create a community where other families realize success.
- Design a "success ladder" which demonstrates how Head Start provides opportunities for *staff* to grow personally and professionally. (This is especially important because so many staff members in Head Start are former program parents.) Use the ladder as a tool for critiquing and improving the program's staff development.
- Develop a large poster that illustrates and promotes the "success ladder" concept to parents.
- Develop a project that recognizes the work and personal achievements of Head Start families. Examples of projects include: an awards event, a special column in the newsletter, a bulletin board display, or a press conference which informs local media of parents' achievements.
- Develop a notebook of resumes from job-seeking parents to present to area employers.
- Invite representatives from local employers to visit your program and offer their insights on how the program's involvement of parents could more closely parallel the work world, so as to better prepare parents for employment or advancement in employment.
- Locate community career counseling programs to find out what services are available to staff and families.

Overhead 2: Building a Success Ladder

How can parents build skills at Head Start?

Overhead 3: Building a Success Ladder (Continued)

- An important role of Head Start is to provide opportunities for parents to develop skills and acquire experience.

- In order to serve all parents, Head Start must offer a broad range of skill-building opportunities.

- Parents who have these opportunities are better prepared to find employment or to move into employment that better meets their needs.

- Head Start's role in supporting skills development is critically important in light of welfare reform and other changes that affect families.

Overhead 4: Building a Success Ladder (Continued)

HOW TO BUILD A LADDER TO SUCCESS

1. Define your program's purpose to include helping parents establish and pursue work-related goals.
2. Identify parent activities that form a "success ladder."
3. Refer to this ladder to identify ways that individual parents can advance themselves.
4. Promote the expectation that every Head Start parent can "climb onto the ladder" and keep climbing.
5. Establish ways to support and celebrate the incremental gains that individuals make.
6. Develop ways to help people deal with change.
7. Make a commitment of long-term support to parents as they progress toward their goals.

Handout 7: Self-Help Cycles

Part A

The Self-Help Cycle

Engaging the Flow

sufficiency — 1. ample means, ability, or resources
2. the state or quality of being adequate, competent

1. Self-Determination is the state of:
a. becoming aware;
b. appreciating myself;
c. believing that I am valuable;
d. defining who I am; and
e. determining who I can become.
2. Self-Empowerment is the state of:
a. my knowledge;
b. my understanding; and
c. my practices and skills to allow myself to become who I believe I can be.
3. Self-Reliance is the state of:
a. examining my situation;
b. creating what I need from my resources; and
c. becoming more wise in choosing between right and wrong.
4. Self-Sufficiency is the state of:
a. feeling competent in directing my life;
b. having ample resources to enjoy my life; and
c. taking charge/control of my life.

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Handout 7: Self-Help Cycles (Continued)

Part B

Instructions: On the following pages are a number of true stories written by Head Start Parents about their life journeys and the role Head Start played in these journeys. Choose a story that you find particularly interesting and analyze it in terms of the four-stage Self-Help Cycle.

1. How did this person become more self-determined for himself or herself? How did Head Start or others play a supportive role?

2. How did this person practice or gain knowledge to help achieve a goal? How did Head Start or others play a supportive role?

3. How did this person work creatively with resources and make informed decisions? How did Head Start or others play a supportive role?

4. How did this person "take charge" of his or her life? How did Head Start or others play a supportive role?

5. Think about someone you know in the Head Start community who is in a similar growth process. Where do you think they are in their cycle? How can (or do) you play a supportive role?

Handout 7: Self-Help Cycles (Continued)

1. James — A Significant Man

I got involved in Head Start after my children enrolled in the program three years ago. A single father raising two children, I realized that Head Start was offering assistance through center meetings and workshops. The Director said, "James, you know we've got these two children here now, you've got to get involved." What hooked me was that first Christmas when the program gave us a "Certificate of Love" and a gift basket in response to some family needs I had shared with the director. That buttered me up and I decided to really get involved.

When election came around I decided to run for Vice Chair of the Policy Council. A number of parents encouraged me to run for chairman because they felt I had leadership skills. So I did, and I became chair. I recruited another man to run for office and there we were, two men and about 40 or 50 women! We worked hard together to get other men involved. We had a luncheon to recruit men. All men were invited. They didn't have to be fathers and their admission was to bring at least one child. We discussed how to keep a men's group going and that is how the Significant Male Task Force began.

The staff began to love what we were doing, so when the Task Force got a newsletter going, the staff helped out with it. The Policy Council also lent its skills to the group. Recently, the Significant Male Task Force has added a Storytelling and Reading Program for men to work with Head Start and the schools. The Task Force is also starting a computer class to show the men how to work on Windows. We also have an extensive annual Christmas program for children.

I see myself as a community activist. Anything can move you towards self-sufficiency if you develop your skills. My dream is to have a center for career and business development in an apartment building within the community. It would serve members of the Significant Male Task Force and have a variety of different businesses under one roof. An administrative staff would help with books, payroll, and taxes. Everyone would have a professional skill and support one another.

C3

Handout 7: Self-Help Cycles (Continued)

2. Rose - A Grandmother on a Mission

Ten days after graduating from a Christian drug rehab, I was given custody of two grandchildren, ages two and three. I walked into my first Parent Meeting, totally overwhelmed. I was elected to the Policy Committee at that very first meeting. I walked out of the meeting determined to be a success!

I was terribly intimidated by the responsibility of these children, and the role of representative faced me squarely in the face. I spoke with the head teacher and shared my fears. She helped me see things in myself I had never looked at before. I began to value my outgoing and caring personality. I increased my self-esteem through training and took every workshop offered on parent involvement. I set my goal to become an advocate for others with the same background I had come from and to break the chains of chemical dependency in families.

Later I was elected Chairperson of my Policy Council. Staff assisted me in developing public speaking skills. I began to set short-term and long-term goals for my future. If I were to be successful, I needed to find an avenue to utilize my knowledge of gangs and drugs. A director suggested that I prepare a workshop for staff at my agency. This opportunity helped me to see my value to the community and staff. I slowly developed new mannerisms and characteristics that helped me believe in myself.

I began to get involved more in local community coalitions and partnerships in the areas of crime, drugs, and gang prevention. When I was elected chairperson of a drug prevention coalition and was the recipient of a Citizen Recognition Award from my County Board of Supervisors, I knew that I was on my way. I started to formulate a plan to continue my education and to not be so quick to volunteer for everything people asked of me. I think this was the hardest part of my change. I learned to rely on my instincts and when in doubt, I learned to wait.

I was so surprised when one of the board members called and offered me a job with a mental health clinic that provides services to adolescents and children. I looked back at the goals I set with that head teacher, and realized that I had accomplished them all. I now am earning a salary that I never thought possible. I am now in college working towards a chemical dependency counselor license. I am moving into the 21st century as a success.

Handout 7: Self-Help Cycles (Continued)

3. Beverly - A Multi-Talented Woman

It first started for me about four years ago when I learned from another parent about the experiences they had gained from volunteering in the Head Start program. I wanted to become more involved in my children's lives and thought by going to school with them I would be able to develop a close bond. So I volunteered in the classroom for a while, and then elections were held for parents to serve on the Policy Council. While I did not know the duties of the Policy Council, I thought the fellowship with other parents like myself would be inviting. I was elected to the Policy Council and right away knew that this would be a place for me to help make a change in my community.

I joined the Social Services Committee. That was very important to me because I was a client of those services and I believed it would be beneficial for me and others to know what was happening. I then joined other committees that I believed in (Special Needs, Budget, Career Development, etc.). I was elected to treasurer of the Policy Council and became more involved as the year passed. I joined for a second year, and began to develop ideas for the Policy Council to carry out.

About that time, my family became homeless. It was very difficult for me. However, I continued volunteering with the Head Start program three times a week. At that time I decided to take charge of my life. I utilized the contacts I had made with the Head Start program and moved my family into stable housing. As other Head Start families faced eviction I was able to use my experience to help them. I then became chairperson of the Policy Council and took a leadership role advocating for parents, training them, and using my experiences with community resources to help them. I was offered a job serving homeless families at the Department of Health and Human Services. This employment made it possible for me to no longer receive Public Assistance, and I will receive an educational award to continue my schooling.

Not only am I working toward my goal of economic independence, I am now helping other families work toward that same goal. I have also used my position with Head Start to help new eligible families become enrolled in the program. With the changes to welfare reform, I have kept the families abreast of the changes affecting their lives. And, I have encouraged Head Start parents to reach out to the community by helping the programs that serve the homeless.

Handout 8: Pathways to Success

Instructions: Your task is to discuss and construct a specific Head Start parent's pathway toward personal and work-related goals. This pathway needs to include economic (i.e., jobs held) and social (i.e., family and life issues) aspects of the journey. Key to this pathway is the role the parent has with his or her child.

Use the following symbols to construct your pathway.

Squares for parent-child activity

Circles for employment or work preparation activity

Triangles for other factors

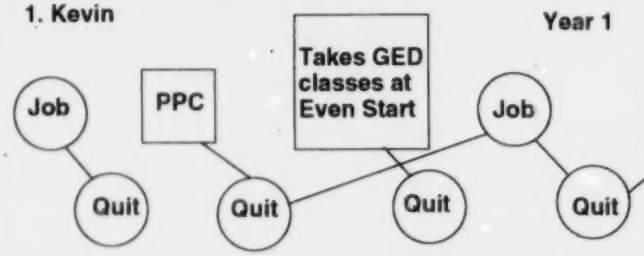
Also note the level of any financial assistance the person is receiving at different stages.

Review the sample pathways on the next pages, then draw a two-year pathway that is representative of someone you know in your Head Start program.

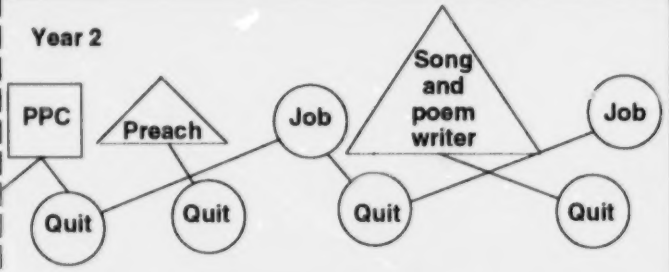
Handout 8: Pathways to Success (Continued)

Two-Year Sample Pathways

1. Kevin

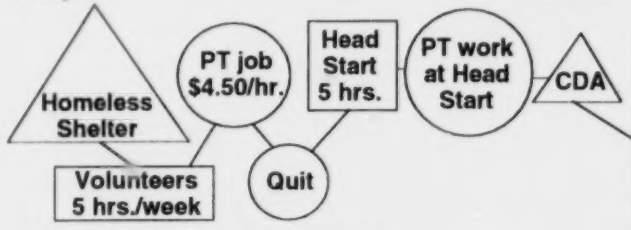


Kevin became active in the Head Start program shortly after leaving a job and immediately got involved with the Parent Center Committee. He also began to study for his GED in the Even Start Family Literacy program, which both he and his three-year-old son enjoyed. Despite the encouragement of staff to stay with the committee and GED classes, he left both when he got a new job. Shortly after, he quit that job.

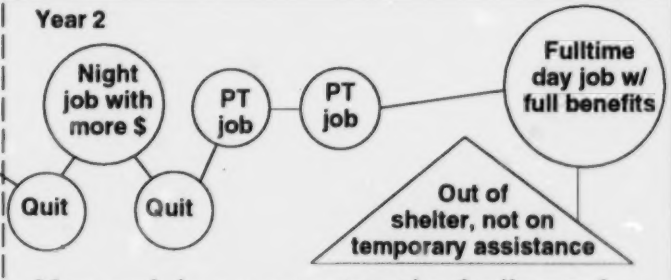


The following year Kevin rejoined the Parent Committee which he left again when he got a new job. In the meantime, he began to explore his spiritual and creative sides through preaching and writing songs and poems. Although he is no longer doing either, he is currently working a job that he likes. The level of assistance his family is receiving has declined significantly.

2. Myra



When Myra came to Head Start she was living in a homeless shelter after leaving an abusive spouse. Her third and youngest child was in the program and she began to volunteer five hours per week. While she was volunteering, she got a part-time job paying minimum wage but she soon left it because she didn't have reliable child care. After that she began working part-time at Head Start and got her CDA credential.



Myra needed more money to get her family out of the shelter so she left and took a job that doubled her income working nights. Child care became a problem so she left that job and began working a series of lower paying part-time jobs. Eventually she found a full time 9-5 job with benefits. Her family no longer receives temporary assistance and has moved from the shelter.

Handout 9: Building A Success Ladder

Sample Success Ladder

Coach a soccer team
Organize a Brownie or Cub Scout troop
Use home activity kit
Help with library books
Volunteer in classroom
Do storytelling
Volunteer for field trips
Teach child self-help skills (tie shoes)
Plan the health & wellness fair
Participate in program self-assessment
Serve as treasurer of Policy Council
Volunteer as bus monitor
Assist in kitchen
Volunteer for share distribution
Cut out material for bulletin board
Work full-time as teacher aide
Begin a home business
Serve as part-time kitchen help at Senior Center
Serve as intern in career paths program
Perform basic clerical work
Substitute as bus aide
Attend nursing school
Attend college-CDA class
Obtain scholarship to local junior college
Attend clerical class
Get GED and learn to use computer
Serve as peer advocate for "I Am" curriculum
Attend Even Start adult literacy class
Attend ESL class
Attend resume writing class
Obtain CPR & First Aid certification
Get U.S. citizenship
Attend county extension workshops on nutrition
Take wellness class (exercise)
Join a support group
Attend workshops on breast feeding
1. Activities with children
2. Volunteer activities
3. Employment activities
4. Education/ training activities
5. Self-Improvement activities

Handout 9: Building A Success Ladder (Continued)

1. **Child-centered activities**
   Entry rung example:
   Bring child to school on time each day.
   Middle rung example:
   Take part in a library program with child each Saturday.
   Upper rung example:
   Coach soccer for neighborhood children.

2. **Volunteer activities**
   Entry rung example:
   Volunteer on a drop-in basis in child's classroom.
   Middle rung example:
   Volunteer from home a few hours each week, translating program materials.
   Upper rung example:
   Volunteer often (15+ hours or more) in older child's elementary school.

3. **Employment**
   Entry rung example:
   Work on-call as a Head Start aide.
   Middle rung example:
   Participate in a work program that pays a stipend and leads to a Child Development Associate credential.
   Upper rung example:
   Obtain a permanent full-time position with salary and benefits.

4. **Education/training activities**
   Entry rung example:
   Attend a weekly literacy class.
   Middle rung example:
   Take a home-study course (10-20 hours per week).
   Upper rung example:
   Attend college or vocational training (20 hours or more per week).

5. **Self-improvement activities**
   Entry rung example:
   Get a library card.
   Middle rung example:
   Attend weekly book discussions.
   Upper rung example:
   Keep a journal.

Handout 9: Building A Success Ladder (Continued)

1. Child-centered activities	2. Volunteer activities	3. Employment activities	4. Education/ training activities	5. Self-Improvement activities

Handout 10: Good Going — Keep Going!

Instructions: Think about eight or nine Head Start parents you know who are pursuing work-related goals. Include parents who are engaged in a range of activities both inside and outside of the program and for whom Head Start has been part of their success. List the names of the parents on the lines below.

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Next, think about the ways that these parents have used the Head Start program to move toward work goals. Choose four to five phrases that describe what they have accomplished to date. (Some sample phrases are provided at the bottom of the page.) Write each phrase in a separate box in the column under "Accomplishment." Next to each phrase, describe what the Head Start program has done to encourage and support this accomplishment. Then think about what else the program could do to offer support. An example has been filled in.

Accomplishment	Ways that Head Start has provided encouragement and support	What else could we do?
Attending citizenship class • Khadija Hussein • Idalia Carrerras	Coordinated with immigrant services	Ask them to write an article for the newsletter on what they are learning

Sample Accomplishments

Regularly volunteering
Attending ESL/GED classes
Earned a GED certificate
Doing an apprenticeship or internship
Attending job training
Obtained vocational certification
Attending college
Completed college
Started own business
Began a new job
Working now over a year

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies

Resume Development

Who Does This Strategy Benefit?

People who are entering the job market anew can benefit from a well presented resume, yet often have the least practical experience and assistance with this task. The competition for quality entry level positions requires that candidates look their best on paper.

What Does It Require?

Resume development can take place in many ways. For example, resumes can be developed through small group workshops or individual sessions. The important thing to remember is a resume is an evolving and changing document that builds a bridge between the skills and talents of the job applicant and the needs of the employer.

How Can Head Start Help?

Head Start provides parents with training, volunteering, and other experiences that they can build into career opportunities. Make sure that parents' skills gained through involvement in Head Start are reflected in their resumes and that they clearly represent their strengths. For example, they may want to include as part of a resume:

- Volunteer Experiences
- Paid Work Experiences
- Educational Experiences
- Networks & Memberships
- Training Experiences
- Other Interests and Achievements

It is also important to know the basic difference between resume types and which is most useful to program participants. The two basic resume types are **Chronological** and **Functional**:

The Chronological Format: This is the most familiar format. This resume reflects the most recent job and works backward. Emphasis is placed on duties and accomplishments within the job titles mentioned.

Use this format if:

1. You have a steady work history, with no gaps.
2. Your most current job is in the same field you want to work in.
3. Your work history reflects continuity and career growth.

Do not use this format if:

1. You plan to get a job in another area of work.
2. You have gaps in employment.

The Functional Format: This is different from the chronological. It emphasizes areas of strength rather than experience.

Use this format if:

1. You are planning to get a job in a new area of work.
2. You have limited work experience.
3. You want to emphasize the skills you do have.

Do not use this format if:

1. You are unable to identify four to five functional headings to highlight.
2. You want to stay in the same work field.

Source: *Work, Sister, Work: How Black Women Can Get Ahead in Today's Business Environment* by Cydney Shields and Leslie C. Shields, Fireside, 1993.

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies (Continued)

Job Development

Who Does This Strategy Benefit?

Job development benefits people who have little work experience or feel stuck in low wage jobs and want jobs that offer them greater pay and opportunity for advancement.

What Does It Require?

Job developers identify job leads and recommend applicants who, while they may not have all of the stated qualifications, would be a good match. They also may provide early work entry support. Job development is a supplement to, not a substitute for, an individual's job search. There are four components of job development: **(1)** Identifying job leads; **(2)** Contacting employers; **(3)** Matching participants to jobs; and **(4)** Providing ongoing support

Identifying Job Leads

All staff, from the secretary to the program director, can identify job leads. Program participants can bring in leads that they hear about that may be of interest to others. Job leads should be placed in a central job bank. A computerized job bank makes it easy to update information. Having one staff member responsible for job development is especially important when the program is working with a few employers who will not want to be approached by different people.

Contacting Employers

Networking with employers is a primary means of obtaining job leads. Job developers may wish to pursue a staffing partnership with businesses that regularly have entry level openings in manufacturing, utilities, hospitality, and other service industries.

Matching Participants to Jobs

Successful job developers work hard to match the right candidate to the right job opening. Successful matches build employer confidence in partnering with your program. Also, program participants who are appropriately placed are more confident about their abilities to advance on the job. To increase the likelihood of a successful match, job developers must screen applicants for their work/interview readiness. They also need to help applicants prepare for interviews by providing information about the employer and the job for which they are applying. Additionally, job developers can promote success by working with the employer and the applicant to address any stigma attached to program involvement.

Providing Ongoing Support

Job developers can tailor activities to the needs of individual participants. They can provide specific information on the types of jobs a participant wants and help people improve their job search and interviewing skills.

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies (Continued)

Mentoring

Who Does This Strategy Benefit?

Anyone who is taking on the challenge of working (or finding work) in a field that is new for them, can greatly benefit from a mentor relationship. This is also an ideal relationship for someone who is planning to re-enter a work field where they have been unsuccessful in the past.

What Does It Require?

Mentors must have a strong work experience to share that can help others reach their life goals. They must be willing to listen first and then provide guidance, support and constructive criticism when needed. Three key steps to mentoring are:

- Finding mentors
- Matching mentors and job hunters or newly employed workers
- Developing and supporting the mentor/job seeker relationship

Finding Mentors

There are a number of professional, cultural, and civic organizations that provide community service. Growth industries such as health, education, technology, and service industries are good areas from which to draw mentors.

Matching Job Seekers with Mentors

A mentoring relationship is more likely to succeed when the job seeker is able to "relate to" his or her chosen mentor. Mentors and job seekers can be matched through several approaches. It may work to hold an open house or conduct interviews to identify mutual interests. A formal matching of job seeker/mentor pairs can follow. Once a match is made, the pair will need to agree to a time, place, and goals for their first few meetings.

Supporting the Job Seeker/Mentor Relationship

It is important to designate a staff person to address any issues or concerns of either party. It is also important to plan ongoing group gatherings that are both informational and social, for example, a dinner with a guest speaker. This type of activity will help to ensure continuity.

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies (Continued)

Small Business Development

Who Does This Strategy Benefit?

People who are self-starters and who prefer not to work outside of the home. Parents of young children and others may find this to be a more viable way to balance family and work responsibilities. Small business entrepreneurship is also an excellent strategy for supplementing family income.

What Does It Require?

Beginning a small business requires three steps:

- Developing a business idea
- Writing a business plan
- Financing the business

Developing A Business Idea

This is the creative part. People must decide what they like to do and would be willing to work at as hard, if not harder, than anyone else. They need to think about the kinds of products or services they could 'sell' others on. Once this decision is made, they need to have a good idea of the market: who is looking for these products and services? How does one get to that customer base? Ideally, a small business should start from home. A person should ask themselves these five questions:

1. Do I have the space I need for inventory, set up, distribution, etc.?
2. Am I able to market and distribute my service or product easily?
3. Am I able to sell my product or service without the need for customers to shop regularly at a place of business?
4. Can electrical and telephone lines or safety features be added to the area of my home that I intend to use for business?
5. Is my home environment quiet enough to allow me to concentrate or carry on a telephone conversation?

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies (Continued)

Small Business Development (continued)

Writing A Business Plan

Whether the business is day care, catering, or some other product or service, you need a clear and comprehensive plan. A business plan should include:

- A business summary and statement of purpose
- A description of the product and industry
- A marketing plan

Depending on the type of business, additional information will need to be provided.

Financing the Business

Mircrocredit programs provide start-up and continual funding for business growth in low income communities. Programs include training, peer support, networking, and other support services. Usually a person must be part of a lending circle where all members are mutually responsible for the repayment of loans. Memberships costs are low and initial financing is for small amounts that are repaid over a short period of time.

The Earned Income Credit (EIC)

The Earned Income Tax Credit, or EIC, can help low-income families finance the start-up of a small business. It can come in the form of a tax refund or as a cash payment to families who do not owe taxes. Consulting with a tax advisor would be necessary. Educating parents about the EIC and helping them take advantage of it can enhance their success in meeting their goals.

Handout 11: Work Success Strategies (Continued)

Alternative Strategy

What Is the Strategy?

Who Does This Strategy Benefit?

What Does It Require of Head Start?

Review your strategy using the quesions provided by the workshop presenter.

Handout 12: Characteristics of the Work World

1. You are expected to appear at scheduled times.
2. You are expected to be on time.
3. You are expected to wear certain kinds of clothes.
4. You will be trained.
5. You will be supervised.
6. You are expected to do specific tasks and make decisions.
7. You will be held to certain standards of behavior.
8. Your work will be evaluated.
9. You will be rewarded for good performance and penalized for poor performance.
10. You are paid and may receive benefits.

Add any other characteristics you can think of:

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

Handout 12: Characteristics of the Work World (Continued)

1. How does the Head Start program model effective scheduling and punctuality?

2. What opportunities are provided for parents to wear business clothing and practice workplace behavior?

3. How are debriefing and guidance provided after a parent has attended a training or begun a new task in the program?

4. How is independent decision-making promoted?

5. What regular system of rewards is in place to "pay" parents for their hard work?

6. What are other ways in which our Head Start program is a model of the work world?

Handout 13: Program Challenges

Program #1: Parent Scholars Program

The Brighter Day Community Head Start Program had been looking at ways to increase education and job opportunities for parents. The Policy Council came up with the idea of creating paid positions for "parent scholars." These positions would be open to current or previous Head Start parents who perform skills that could transfer to outside employment.

A committee was created to decide what useful tasks these parent scholars could perform. This committee decided that what was really needed was help serving the diverse families of the program. Specifically, two parents were needed to translate the minutes of Policy Council meetings and other documents into Spanish and Vietnamese. Another parent was needed to assist the Policy Council secretary with typing and correspondence.

The committee decided that as part of the selection process, applicants would translate the agenda and minutes from a recent Policy Council meeting. The translations would be checked for accuracy by a staff person or some other source in the community. For the clerical position, applicants would take a typing test.

The Council decided that parent scholars would serve for 60 hours over a period of three months. The positions would then be opened up to new applicants. That way, a larger number of parents would have the opportunity to gain work experience that could be put on a resume. The Council set the wage for the parent scholars at $6.50 to $7.00 per hour.

Three parents were hired and performed their tasks very well. However, at the end of the three-month term, none of them wanted to leave their positions. They said they liked their work and that it would be too difficult to transfer the skills they were using to a good job.

They asked the Policy Council to create three more parent scholar positions so that new parents could be hired without them having to give up their jobs.

Handout 13: Program Challenges (Continued)

Program #2: Career Fair

The Greater Community Head Start Program wanted to introduce parents to opportunities for employment. One parent suggested the program host a Career Fair where local employers and parents could meet each other.

A committee was formed to plan the fair. First, the committee surveyed all Head Start parents to determine job skills and interests. Using these survey results, the committee looked through the local newspaper to see what businesses were hiring. Committee members then contacted personnel directors from each business to explain how they could find good job candidates by taking part in the Career Fair. The callers asked the business to send a representative to the fair to provide the community with information about the company and to interview candidates.

One committee member thought it would be useful to inquire with the employers of relatives to see if they were hiring. Another parent recommended that a career counselor be at the fair to assist parents in such areas as preparing for interviews, deciding which jobs to pursue, or developing their resumes. One parent who had her own home business offered to share information on how to become self-employed.

The Career Fair incorporated all of these ideas. There was great participation from Head Start parents and staff. However, weeks later, only one person out of all the participants felt that the connections she made at the fair might eventually lead to a job.

Handout 13: Program Challenges (Continued)

Program #3: Career Development Workshop Series

The Western County Head Start program had been very successful in promoting employment opportunities to Head Start parents. However, over time staff discovered that some of the parents were not prepared to enter the workplace. It was therefore decided to create a series of Career Development workshops.

Several parents were interviewed to determine the issues that should be addressed at the workshops. A committee of parents and staff was formed to prepare the agenda for these workshops. The committee defined the goals and agenda as follows:

GOALS

- To increase career planning skills of Head Start parents
- To prepare Head Start parents to achieve self-sufficiency

AGENDA

Session #1
Defining Your Career Goals and Interests
Interest/Career Survey

Session #2
Exploring the Job Search Process
The Advantages of Networking
Field Trip to Career Net at the Community College
Computer Training

Session #3
Developing the Best Resume
Resume types
Trainings/Workshops on Resume Writing
Cover Letters and Letters of Inquiry
Letters of Acceptance and Rejection

Session #4
Preparing for the Interview
Filling out the Application
Exploring Questions from Potential Employers
The Different Types of Interviews

Session #5
Exploring Educational Opportunities
Selecting a College
Business, Secretarial, and Technical Schools
Exploring Financial Aid and Educational GrantsS

Session #6
Dressing For Success
Locating Donated Clothing Centers/ Thrift Shops
Using Accessories (jewelry, scarves, etc.)

Midway into the workshop series, staff and parents noticed that attendance was down. They began to wonder how to maintain strong participation for the next three workshops.

Handout 13: Program Challenges (Continued)

Group Discussion Sheet

1. What is the goal of this effort?

2. What challenge do program planners face in meeting their goal?

3. What do program planners need to consider in order to meet this challenge?

4. What ideas do you have for making this effort more successful?

5. Now, discuss activities your program is doing to support parents' efforts to find new or better employment. Select one for discussion and use the above questions to consider ways to make this effort even more successful.

Building Success in the Community

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Initiate support and action networks by which those involved help one another reach shared goals.
- Identify key resources in the community that can assist them as they pursue their goals.
- Influence community services to make them more responsive to their needs.

Key Concepts

- Individuals cannot achieve their goals in isolation from others. Everyone relies on a network of community support.
- The stronger the community, the greater the opportunities for individual members to pursue their chosen goals. Community strength requires the active involvement of its members.
- Head Start parents have many skills and much experience that can be put to use to make their community stronger.
- An understanding of policies that affect families and identification of key decision makers is critical to building success in the community.

Background Information

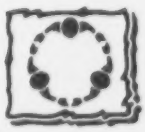
As explored in the previous module, Head Start provides many opportunities for parents to set and pursue goals. The broader community serves a similar function for its members. Module 3 begins with a focus on community and examines how building community support systems is essential to success for families. In this module, participants also will deepen their understanding of the supportive role the Head Start community plays in an individual's own self-help efforts.

A healthy community provides greater opportunities for individual growth and achievement. A weak community provides fewer opportunities. The conditions of the community, the events that take place in it, and the political processes that govern it all affect the ability of individuals to pursue their goals.

Head Start staff also need to recognize the role they themselves can play in shaping community life, particularly as welfare reform and other current issues affect the opportunities available to families. The role of ad-

vocate is not always an easy one to assume. Many people involved with Head Start are nurturers who are perhaps most comfortable within their classroom or home settings. It is important, however, that they see themselves as key players in the broader community, acting on behalf of both the families they represent and themselves as individuals. They have voices that need to be heard as decisions are made that affect the community. And, they have valuable skills and experience that can usefully be applied to solving community problems.

Activity 3-1: Building Community Supports[1]



Purpose: Participants will explore how Head Start can help forge stronger communities in which families can pursue their personal and professional goals.

Materials

Overhead 5: *Head Start and Community*; Overhead 6: *Building Community*; Handout 14: *Strategies for Buillding Community*; chart paper and markers; pens and pencils.

Process

Trainer Preparation Notes:
To ensure that participants have a shared understanding of a key word used here, it is suggested that you precede this activity with Activity 1-1: *Defining "Community,"* from the Head Start Training Guide, *Building Supportive Communities.*

Also, before the activity, prepare on chart paper the three discussion questions that appear at the top of page 81.

Begin by displaying Overhead 5. Read aloud the quotation:

"In planning Head Start's future, we must consciously create program structures that encourage a strong community life for all families."
Chris Carman
Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

[1] This activity is based on the position paperr, "A Community Framework for Head Start" by Chris Carman, Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The article appears in Appendix B.

Ask participants to reflect silently on the quotation. Then read aloud and discuss the following three questions, displaying each question in turn on chart paper:

- What is a strong community life?
- How do we encourage a strong community life within Head Start?
- How do we encourage a strong community life outside of Head Start?

Use Overhead 6 to review the ways in which Head Start's role can help build community.

Head Start encourages a strong community life by:

- Building on the capacity of families to effectively meet shared needs.
- Building on the capacity of families to bring about change in their neighborhoods and communities.
- Engaging families in broader circles of community life.
- Expanding families' social networks through active grassroots involvement.

Divide participants into four groups. Distribute Handout 14: *Strategies for Building Community*, which contains four statements describing the ways that Head Start encourages a strong community life. Assign each group one of the four statements. Direct the groups to discuss the following questions:

- What could your Head Start program do in this regard to build community?
- How could you put these ideas into action?

Encourage participants to brainstorm freely and not to get bogged down in the details of how to make their ideas happen. Allow 20 minutes for discussion.

Debriefing

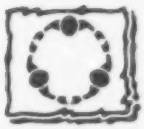
Lead a general discussion that covers the following questions:

- What needs to happen for any of these ideas to become real?
- Where would we start?

To conclude, ask if there are any participants who would like to stand up and declare a commitment to working on one of the ideas generated by this activity. Thank any individuals who do, and ask if any others would like to join in the effort.

Ask participants to post the handout somewhere where they will see it every day, so that they continue to think of what they can do to develop stronger communities for Head Start families.

Activity 3-2: Finding Shared Goals



Purpose: Participants will uncover shared goals and consider how they might pool efforts and make use of community resources in order to accomplish them.

Materials

Handout 15: *Goals for Building Success*; Handout 16: *Strategies for Support Group*; chart paper; markers; pens or pencils.

Process

> **Trainer Preparation Notes:**
> This activity builds on previous exercises in this guide. Thus, participants taking part should be familiar with goalsetting and also should have had ample opportunities beforehand to reflect on goals.

Introduce the activity by saying that participants will be reflecting on their goals and sharing these goals with each other, in order to consider ways that they might be able to work together to accomplish them. Distribute Handout 15: *Goals for Building Success*. Note that there are three categories on the handout:

- Your children
- Your personal life
- Your professional life

These categories are there to help participants organize their thoughts, but they should not feel restricted by them.

Allow ten minutes for participants to reflect and write down their goals.

While they are doing this, take three pieces of chart paper and label them with the three categories. Tape up each sheet in a different section of the room.

> **Trainer Preparation Notes:**
> If participants have suggested another category or categories, prepare chart paper with those headings as well.

When everyone has completed the handout, call for their attention. Explain that they will be dividing into groups to discuss how they can help each other reach their goals. Ask participants to think about these two questions:

- Which category of goals do you most want or need to work on?
- For which category of goals would support from others be most useful to you?

Ask participants to use their answers to these questions to decide which group to join. Have them take their chairs with them to form a circle near the chart paper with the goal category they have selected.

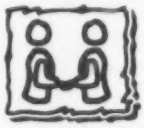
Next, direct the individuals in each small group to take turns copying one or more of their goals from the selected category onto the chart paper. When all members of the group have finished this task, have them discuss the questions on page 2 of Handout 15.

Debriefing

Ask for volunteers to give brief, three-minute summaries of each group's discussion.

After each group has reported, distribute Handout 16: *Strategies for Support Groups*. Discuss the handout and encourage any "first steps" participants are willing to take to form support groups.

Activity 3-3: The Impact of Policies in your Community



Purpose: Participants will examine a specific social policy and its impact on Head Start families. They will then consider how Head Start and the larger community can work together to make sure the policy is implemented in ways that respond to the needs of affected families.

Materials

Handout 17: *Policy Worksheet*; pens or pencils.

Process

Trainer Preparation Notes:
Prepare for this session by collecting contact information (names, addresses, and phone numbers) for people who are expert on social policies affecting families. This may include:

- Community activists
- Workers at social service and other community agencies
- Reference librarians
- High school or college government teachers
- Government agency officials
- Local and state legislators
- National public policy organizations

Prepare this information into a handout that you can share with participants. You also may want to have a phone book and any other community directories with you at the session.

Welfare reform, enacted in 1996, is a major social policy affecting families. It has been summarized in Appendix C, and is suggested as a focus of study for this exercise. However, participants may choose to focus on any social policy affecting families.

Distribute Handout 17: *Policy Worksheet* and encourage participants to use it for note-taking during your discussion together. Begin by asking participants to think about social policies (laws and regulations) that affect families. For example, participants may mention:

- Welfare reform
- Education reform
- Child care, child support and other areas of family services

Ask participants to select one policy that interests them and has a strong impact on Head Start families. Then ask them what they know about this policy. Encourage them to think of at least five statements they can make about this policy.

Then, ask participants to reflect on ways this policy affects Head Start families. Again, encourage them to think of at least five statements they can make about the policy's effects.

Finally, ask participants to think about what they *don't* know about this policy. Have them think of five questions they have about this policy. The following example, using welfare reform as the policy topic, demonstrates how your discussion might flow:

EXAMPLE: Welfare Reform

Statements participants may make about welfare reform:

- "AFDC" has been replaced by a program called "TANF" (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).
- For most people, there is a lifetime limit for federal assistance.
- You can receive aid for only so long before you have to do community service or go back to work.
- There is a limit on how long you can collect food stamps unless you are in training or working.
- Underage parents have to go to school or training if their child is over 12 weeks old.
- States have leeway in how they implement TANF.

Statements participants may make about the effect of welfare reform on Head Start families:

- Parents are more motivated to find jobs.
- Teen parents especially are taking advantage of the training opportunities.
- Some families are having a hard time moving into work because of transportation problems.

- Finding child care is hard, especially for children under one years old.
- There are not enough jobs in the neighborhood for everyone who wants to move off welfare.

Questions participants may have about welfare reform:

- What are the time limits for TANF participation?
- What child-care assistance is available to families?
- What health benefits are available to families seeking work?
- What transportation assistance is available?
- What are the rules about food stamps?

Next, share with participants your list of contacts. Brainstorm with participants about who would know the answers to their specific questions. Participants may think of other experts who are not on your list; encourage them to share their ideas.

Give participants the assignment of selecting one policy expert to contact. Help them make a plan for asking that person their five questions. Encourage them to ask for any available print or video information that explains the policy and how it is implemented in their community.

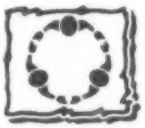
Arrange a time to meet after the interviews.

Debriefing

Have participants share the information they learned from their interviews. Using Part C of Handout 17 as a guide, discuss:

1. How does this policy affect Head Start families?
2. What can our program do to make sure that the policy is implemented in ways that respond to the needs of these families?
3. What other community groups work with families affected by this policy?
4. How can we share information and work together?

Activity 3-4: Making Your Point of View Count



Purpose: Participants will use a diagram to develop plans to influence key decision makers whose policies affect Head Start families.

Materials

Handout 18: *Sociogram*; paper; pens or pencils.

Process

Begin this workshop activity by asking participants the following questions:

- What changes are taking place in our community that affect families? How can we make our point of view known?
- How are we able to influence decisions that are made?
- How about other community programs and agencies? Do we work with them to support or advance decisions that promote positive outcomes for Head Start families?

Next, distribute Handout 18: *Sociogram.* Explain that sociograms allow you to see how people fit into a larger network of decision makers.

Add that sociograms are what the word sounds like:

socio grams = social pictures

Let participants know that they will develop a sociogram of state, county, and local officials (elected and appointed) as well as other informal leaders who participate in decision-making efforts.

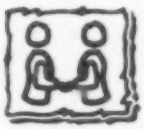
They will then use their sociogram to consider specific steps they can take to positively affect policy changes.

Read through the directions, and see if there are any questions. Working individually or in pairs, have participants complete their sociograms. Then work with participants through the "Process" and "Plan" sections of the handout.

Debriefing

Wrap up the session by letting participants know that their voice is just as important as anyone else's. To raise awareness and stimulate change, their voices must be heard. End by encouraging participants to write and distribute copies of their plan to people in their circle of influence who can help.

Activity 3-5: Giving Back and Moving Forward



Purpose: Participants will develop strategies that meet specific needs in the Head Start community.

Materials

Handout 19: *Meeting Community Needs*; chart paper; markers.

Process

Begin by explaining to participants that a community's success is in large part measured by whether everyone is able to pursue goals. One way to ensure that everyone in a community can move forward is for those who have made advances to give back in any way they can.

Explain that the task in this activity will be to think of one specific community support that can be developed to respond a community need or solve a community problem.

Next, pass out Handout 19: *Meeting Community Needs*. Explain that the ideas presented were actually developed at various Head Start programs to meet specific needs in their respective communities.

Have participants work in pairs to think about the following:

- How do these ideas build community support?
- How do these ideas build the skills (problem solving, etc.) of those who participate?
- How do these ideas allow for meaningful participation for all involved?

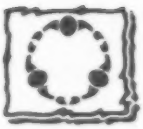
Allow 20 minutes for participants to develop their own ideas and consider how their strategies meet the goals that have been set (building community, building skill, allowing for meaningful participation). After 20 minutes or so, reconvene with participants.

Debriefing

Have the pairs present their ideas and explain how they meet the goals of building community, skills, and meaningful participation. Ask the following:

- If you were to move forward with this idea, what would you do next?
- Who needs to be involved?

Activity 3-6: Program Checklist



Purpose: Participants will use a checklist to evaluate their program in terms of how it helps parents establish and progress toward goals. Checklist results will be used to stimulate a discussion of program changes or improvements that should be made.

Materials

Handout 20: *Program Checklist*; pens or pencils.

Process

This is a wrap-up activity that ties together all of the work participants have done in the three modules.

Distribute Handout 20: *Program Checklist* (reserve the scoring page for later). Explain to participants that the purpose of this activity is to create an overall picture of how effectively their program supports parents' efforts to "build on success." The checklist will then be used as a discussion tool for determining what needs to be done to make the program even better in this regard.

Divide participants into groups of six to eight. If participants come from different Head Start programs, have them group together by program.

Ask for a volunteer from each group. Within each group, the volunteer should read through each of the statements on the checklist, allowing time for participants to rank their program with regard to the statement on their own copies of the handout. Instruct participants not to discuss the statements at this point, but rather to score all the statements independently. Give them ten minutes for this task.

After the small groups have completed this procedure, direct them to go through the checklist once more, together, in order to come to a consensus on each statement. Direct the groups to talk specifically about what the program does or does not do in terms of each statement. Give them 20 minutes for this task.

Next, distribute the scoring page from Handout 20. Have each group tabulate its score and address the questions for its score range. Allow 20 minutes for this discussion.

Debriefing

Reconvene into the large group. Ask a volunteer from each small group to report on its checklist results and any conclusions the group came to as a result. Encourage comments from other members of the large group, and focus discussion on how the program can follow through on the insights gained from this activity.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

- Building on the interest generated by Activity 3-2, establish a parent support group. Arrange a meeting place and time for the group's first meeting. Establish an agenda for the meeting. Publicize it within Head Start and, if appropriate, within the larger community.
- Organize a group effort to influence key decision makers whose policies affect Head Start families. Target a specific goal based on the concerns participants identified in Activity 3-4. Begin your organizing effort using a plan developed by participants using Handout 18.
- Develop a directory of community-based self-help programs in local neighborhoods, for example: Alcoholics Anonymous, Parents without Partners, babysitting cooperatives, etc.
- Create a family directory that lists the skills and interests of parents. Encourage parents to refer to the directory to organize activities of mutual interest or to barter services with each other.
- Organize a workshop based on Activity 2-1: Building a Program Success Ladder, but substitute the word "community" for "Head Start" so that the objective is to build a community success ladder. Use this activity to draw a broad picture of how the community supports individual achievement of goals. From this picture, have the group explore: What supports are missing? What key structures could Head Start supply? What expertise do staff and parents at Head Start have that can be used to strengthen the community? Develop an action plan for strengthening the community success ladder.

Overhead 5: Head Start and Community

"In planning Head Start's future, we must consciously create program structures that encourage a strong community life for all families."

Chris Carman
Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Overhead 6: Building Community

Head Start encourages a strong community life by:

- Building on the capacity of families to effectively meet shared needs.
- Building on the capacity of families to bring about change in their neighborhoods and communities.
- Engaging families in broader circles of community life.
- Expanding families' social networks through active grassroots involvement.

Handout 14: Strategies for Building Community

Instructions: Below are four statements describing how Head Start helps build community. Your group will be assigned one of the four statements. Discuss the statement assigned to your group in terms of the following questions:

- What could your Head Start program do in this regard to build community?
- How could you put these ideas into action?

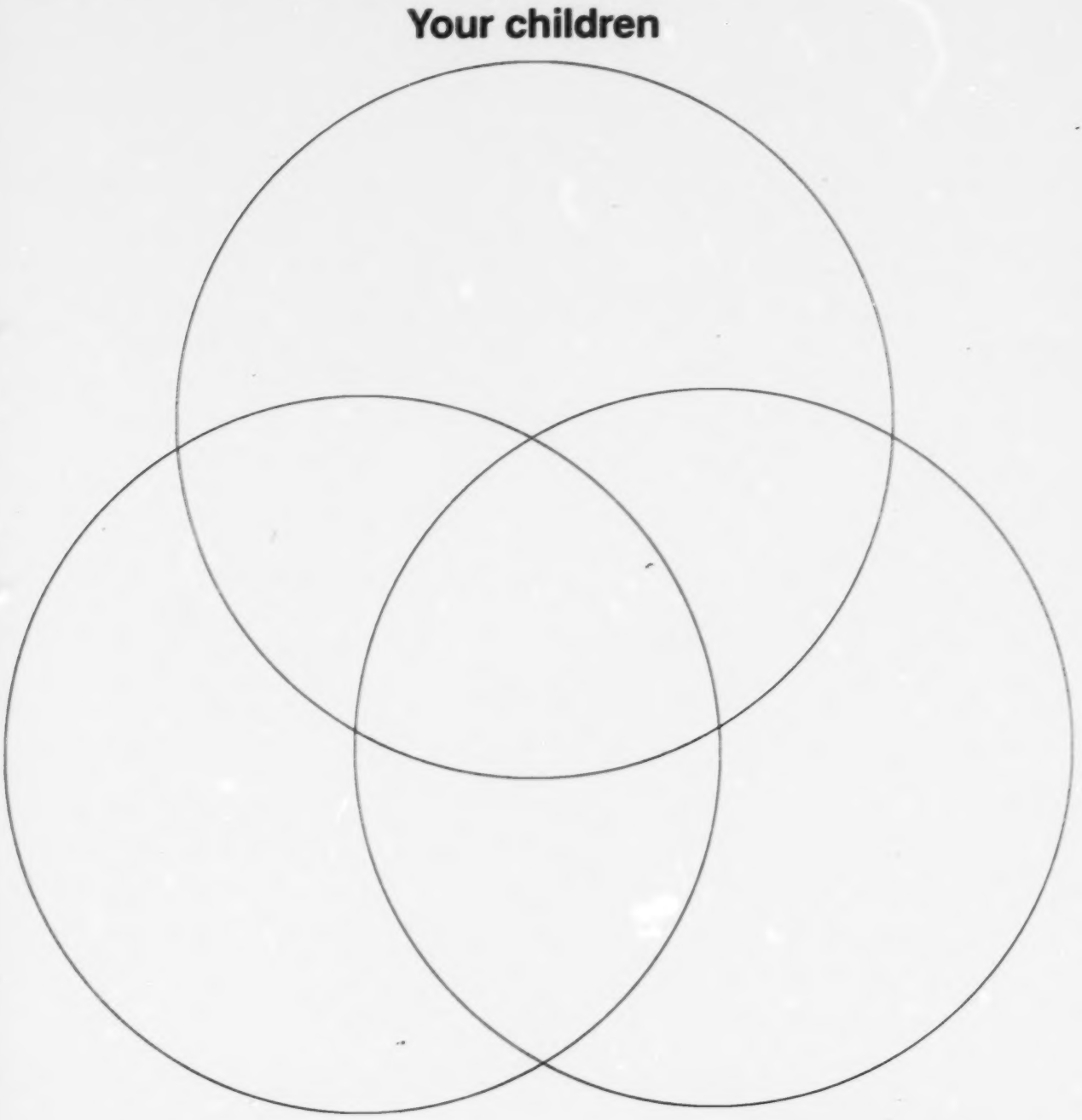
1. Head Start encourages a strong community life by building on the capacity of families to effectively meet shared needs.
   Example: Organize evening meals for families with working parents.

2. Head Start encourages a strong community life by building on the capacity of families to bring about change in their neighborhoods and communities.
   Example: Organize to obtain safe playground equipment at the local park.

3. Head Start encourages a strong community life by engaging families in broader circles of community life.
   Example: Hold a "What's Next?" evening where alumni share how their work and family life have evolved since leaving Head Start.

4. Head Start encourages a strong community life by expanding families' social networks through active grassroots involvement.
   Example: Host a family conference open to all that does not cluster participants by income but rather by interests.

Handout 15: Goals for Building Success



Handout 15: Goals for Building Success (Continued)

1. In what ways are these goals similar?

2. What information, new ideas, or skills could members of the group share in order to help each other achieve these goals?

3. What kinds of encouragement and support could members of the group share in order to help each other achieve these goals?

4. How can the Head Start program support the achievement of these goals?

5. What resources in the community could be used to support the achievement of these goals?

6. If you wanted to create a support group for the achievement of these goals, how would you start?

Handout 16: Strategies for Support Groups

1. What are support groups?

Support groups bring together people who are confronting similar issues. Members help each other tackle problems and pursue goals. Support groups can help an individual recognize strengths, develop new skills, locate resources, and bond with others in an atmosphere of encouragement and friendship.

2. How are support groups useful to Head Start parents and staff working together to build success?

Support groups are helpful in three ways:

They are a source for information, new ideas, or skills
- career exploration
- pre-employability skills
- child development
- budgeting
- human relations
- self-esteem

They offer encouragement and support
- a friendly ear
- a pat on the back
- a group in which to brainstorm solutions to a problem
- a chance to relax and have fun

They can supply referrals to other services
- family emergency services
- legal assistance
- counseling or therapy
- housing assistance
- substance abuse treatment

3. What can parents and staff do to make support groups successful?

Parents can:
- Define clear goals for the group and survey parents for interests/needs
- Establish ground rules for group meetings (i.e., confidentiality, respect for various opinions, etc.)
- Recruit others for the support group
- Plan group sessions
- Provide opportunities to develop leadership skills (committees, individual assignments, and planning sessions)

Staff can:
- Develop directory of community resources
- Maintain contacts with other local service providers
- Review organizational policies which relate to the activities of parent groups
- Help find and maintain suitable facilities for the support group
- Share group goals with other staff members and find out how they can support the effort

Adapted with permission from: *Empowering People: Parent Groups* by Susan Powell, National Center for Family Literacy, 1993.

Handout 17: Policy Worksheet

Part A: Pick A Policy To Study

Instructions: With your coach, work through the following questions.

1. What are some social policies (laws and regulations) that affect families?

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

2. Circle one policy, above, that interests you and has a strong impact on Head Start families.

3. What statements can you make about this policy?

4. How does this policy affect families in Head Start?

Handout 17: Policy Worksheet (Continued)

5. What are five questions you have about this policy?

6. Who could answer these questions?

Part B: Asking the Expert

Instructions: Call or visit the expert who can answer the questions you have. Use the following interview format as a guide.

"Hello, My name is (your name) . I am with (name of your Head Start program), and we are collecting information about social policies that affect families. I have a few questions that I hope you can answer. Do you have time to talk now?"

(If the expert says no, arrange for another time to talk. If the expert says yes, ask the five questions that you have written at the top of this page. Take notes, if possible. After asking your five questions, close with the following two questions.)

"Do you have any brochures, handouts or videos that explain how the policy is implemented in our community?

(If yes, arrange to pick them up or have them mailed to you.)

"Would you be willing to come speak to Head Start staff and parents about this policy?"

(If the expert says yes, say that you will call back if you are able to arrange for a program on the topic.)

"Thank you very much for your time. Good bye."

Handout 17: Policy Worksheet (Continued)

Part C: Sharing the Information

Instructions: Prepare to discuss the following questions with your coach.

1. How does this policy affect Head Start families?

2. What can our program do to respond?

3. What other community agencies support families affected by this policy?

4. How can we share information and work together?

Handout 18: Sociogram

Directions: In the space provided on each sociogram, write the name of an influential leader. Beneath the leader's name write the names of people who are a part of the leader's "circle of influence" (colleagues, office administrator, etc.). Talk to others to expand your lists. Make sure to add other informal leaders who you know affect policy or its implementation.

_____ , **State director for family policy**

_____ , **State or local elected official**

_____ , **County or local supervisor for social services**

_____ , **Business or community leader involved in family policy**

_____ , **(other)**

_____ , **(other)**

Handout 18: Sociogram (Continued)

The Process

1. Think about the families in your Head Start program. What is a specific change many are facing as a result of policy decisions? How are they working with that change? (i.e., what positive and creative solutions have they come up with or what hurdles and challenges are they facing?)

2. Next, identify one change in the way that policies are implemented that would make it possible for more families to find a workable solution (for example, use more resources for wraparound day care services).

3. Look back at your sociograms. Think about which policy leader (elected, appointed, or informal) has the most influence over the change that you would like to see implemented that supports families. Next consider how you might approach that person. Would you first approach him or her directly, or go through someone you know who is in the leader's circle of influence? Are there leaders on other sociograms whose opinions you need to influence? Think about creative ways to influence people (i.e., invite a policy maker to a new wraparound day care program, attend a forum sponsored by their agency and speak on the value of this service and needs for expansion). Remember, there are a variety of ways (distributing newsletters, showcasing innovations, news conferences, polling, meetings, letter writing, etc.) to get your voice heard.

The Plan

Consider what other agencies as well as neighborhood and community groups need to be involved to positively effect change. Look back at your sociogram and chart your strategy to influence others and make your point of view count.

Goal: To change/improve/influence_____

_____

Steps:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Repeat the process if necessary to address other issues

Handout 19: Meeting Community Needs

Idea #1 Adopt-A-Shelter — Helping Families in the Community

The Head Start center proposes a project to help homeless families in the community, called Adopt-A-Shelter. A notice will be posted describing the shelter that has been "adopted" by the center. The notice will list the program's needs in terms of food, personal hygiene products, clothing, volunteers, and other items. Head Start parents can use the list to identify the ways they can help. For example, parents who have extra clothes can donate them. Parents who have time can help by volunteering at the shelter.

Idea #2 Emergency Loan Fund

The Policy Council proposes a fund for Head Start families who may be experiencing emergency situations such as: eviction, utility cut-off or lack of funds to pay for medications. A fundraiser would be used to set up a $1,000 fund to help Head Start families. The following criteria guide the application process:

- The family must complete an application with their Head Start family worker.
- The family must provide proof of the emergency and, with the help of the Social Services worker, first apply to the local Department of Social Services or other local community resources. If they still need additional money, they may apply to the fund for an amount up to $100.
- For the application to be approved, the family must have a workable plan on how they will keep the bill up-to-date and pay back the loan.
- The application must be processed by the Parent Involvement Coordinator to maintain confidentiality. The Policy Council releases the funds when the circumstances (name withheld) of the family are shared.

Think about the following questions:

1. How do these ideas build community support and caring?
2. How do they build the skills (problem solving, etc.) of those who participate?
3. How do they provide opportunities for meaningful participation?

Apply the same three criteria to the idea you develop.

Handout 20: Program Checklist

Instructions: Read the following statements. For each statement, select a score from 1 to 4:

1 = Not true of our program
2 = Somewhat true of our program
3 = Mostly true of our program
4 = True of our program

1	2	3	4	
❑	❑	❑	❑	1. Our program's purpose includes helping parents define and move toward goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	2. The program supports parents in setting priorities and goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	3. The program offers opportunities for parents to pursue goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	4. There are enough of these opportunities, and they are sufficiently diverse, so that every parent can pursue a goal through Head Start.
❑	❑	❑	❑	5. Program staff help parents connect to the activities that will enable them to pursue their goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	6. The program promotes the expectation that every Head Start parent can set a goal and move toward it.
❑	❑	❑	❑	7. The program has established ways to support and celebrate the incremental gains that individuals make.
❑	❑	❑	❑	8. The program has developed ways to help individuals meet the challenges that come with pursuing a goal.
❑	❑	❑	❑	9. The program has made a commitment of long-term support to parents as they progress toward their goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	10. The program provides encouragement to parents as they pursue goals.

Handout 20: Program Checklist (Continued)

1	2	3	4	
❑	❑	❑	❑	11. If parents hve trouble moving forward in their pursuit of goals, the program provides them with the support they need to keep going or to try again.
❑	❑	❑	❑	12. All staff members consider themselves responsible for supporting and encouraging parents in their pursuit of goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	13. The program helps parents prepare for each new challenge by thinking through how it will affect them and what will be expected of them.
❑	❑	❑	❑	14. The program offers activities that are "work-like" so that participants can practice and acquire the skills they need to advance in employment.
❑	❑	❑	❑	15. The program has created special programs to assist parents in pursuing their goals, for example, to obtain a new or better job.
❑	❑	❑	❑	16. The program is committed to "troubleshooting" so that these special programs succeed.
❑	❑	❑	❑	17. The program helps to build a strong community in which individual members can set and pursue goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	18. The program helps parents identify shared goals so as to pool efforts to achieve these goals.
❑	❑	❑	❑	19. The program facilitates an understanding of policies and their impact upon Head Start families and the larger community.
❑	❑	❑	❑	20. The program encourages individuals to participate in the process by which policies are made that affect the community.
❑	❑	❑	❑	21. The program encourages individuals to give back to the community.

Handout 20: Program Checklist (Continued)

SCORING

63-84 points: Pat yourselves on the back! Your program has established itself as a springboard for parents' success. Ask yourselves:

- Can we do even more to help parents set and move toward goals?
- How can we serve as a model to other agencies serving the community?
- How can we work together with other community organizations to create a broad, integrated range of opportunities for parents seeking self-improvement?

42-62 points: Take a bow, then get back to work! Your program is doing some positive things to help parents build on success. However, more opportunities exist to enhance this support. Ask yourselves:

- What should be our priorities as we strengthen our support of parents as they define and move toward goals?
- What other community agencies can we look to as models?
- What other community agencies can we look to as partners for building community-wide support for parents seeking self-improvement?

21-41 points: Time to reassess! In many ways your program can enhance the support it provides to parents as they pursue their goals. Ask yourselves:

- Are we committed to helping each parent build upon success?
- Where should we focus first to strengthen our support of parents as they set and move toward goals?
- What do we need to do first in order to follow through on this plan?

Continuing Professional Development

An important role of Head Start staff — the role addressed by this guide — is to support parents' personal and professional success. This role requires staff to develop in two dimensions. First, they need to be compassionate — to be sympathetic and understanding as they counsel parents. Second, they need to be inspiring — to be coach and cheerleader, challenging parents to take charge and aim high for new successes in their lives.

College-level course work can assist staff in developing professionally along both of these dimensions.

Counseling

This field prepares staff to provide assistance to people in a variety of human resource and educational settings. Course work offered at many universities includes:

Career Counseling
Employee Assistance Counseling
Group Counseling
Rehabilitative Counseling
Counseling Substance Abusers
Job Placement and Supported Employment
Work and Adult Development

Education and Human Resource Development

These fields offer course work in such areas as:

Adult Learning and Human Resource Development
Personnel Administration
Vocational - Technical Education

Many of the courses require prerequisites in basic counseling, psychology or education. Experience working with adults in a community human development program may also fulfill prerequisite requirements.

Your Head Start program may want to develop special arrangements with a local university to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for staff.

Professional and social networks also can be invaluable for providing support to staff in their roles as counselor/coach/cheerleader. In such groups they can share success stories, get advice and ideas from professional peers, and renew their energy and enthusiasm for the important work they do.

Publications

The following are some of the resources reviewed and used in the development of this guide. A tremendous amount of new material is available or being developed on welfare reform and self-sufficiency issues. Programs are advised to keep abreast of new and current materials.

Bloom, Dan. ***After AFDC: Welfare-to-Work Choices and Challenges for States*** (1997). Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), Three Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016, (212) 532-3200. 135 pgs., $10. This well-written, easy-to-read volume offers a foundation in state and local welfare reform efforts. Key findings and lessons learned from 20 years of research focusing on state and local efforts are summarized to help programs make informed and realistic choices in the development of programs. This book is divided into three parts: Part 1 discusses the key features of the federal legislation and current labor market; Part 2 reviews four approaches to welfare reform; and Part 3 identifies broad lessons, issues, challenges, pitfalls and new opportunities in designing reforms.

Brown, Amy. ***Work First: How to Implement an Employment-Focused Approach to Welfare Reform*** (1997). This is also available from MDRC. 131 pgs., $10. A how-to guide, this publication builds on and extends 20 years of evaluating welfare reform projects by MDRC. It also summarizes information from the large scale evaluation of the JOBS Program run by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. The guide is divided into several areas that include: an Introduction that defines Work First; Getting Started — Advice on Program Policy Planning; Implementing Work First — Advice in Program Administration; Structuring Activities — Advice on Program Components; Working with Participants — Advice on Case Management; and Work First in Context — Advice on Related Policies. Two critical appendices highlight work-related provisions of the 1996 federal welfare legislation as well as programs, organizations and resources.

Brown, Les. ***Live Your Dreams*** (1992). Avon Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019. 271 pgs., $10, available from local bookstores. Written by the inspirational speaker Les Brown, *Live Your Dreams* urges readers to dare to dream. Divided into ten chapters, the author focuses on goal setting, overcoming fears, the power to change and steps to greatness. An action planner is included for readers to use in charting and planning individual growth and development.

Resources

Children's Defense Fund. ***Twenty Things You Should Know About Ohio's New Welfare Law*** (1997). Children's Defense Fund, 52 East Lynn Street, Suite 400, Columbus, OH 43215. (614) 221-2244. Free brochure. This very useful brochure is designed for Ohio, however, the information it contains is applicable to many states. Steps that advocates can take in their county are included.

Covey, Stephen R. ***The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*** (1989). Fireside, Rockfeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. 358 pgs., $14, available from local bookstores. This well-written guide is designed to be a companion to individuals in their continual process of change and growth. Covey's landmark work was a national best seller and remains a staple in corporate seminars and training. A very valuable resource for programs and individuals.

Frasier, George. ***Success Runs In Our Race: The Complete Guide To Effective Networking in the African American Community*** (1996). Avon Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019. 348 pgs., $12.50, available from local bookstores. The importance of networking is often undervalued in many communities. The author provides practical and useful networking techniques, strategies and tactics as well as true stories to which everyone can relate. A valuable Success Net Workbook is included in the Appendix. Community action programs could benefit from techniques, strategies and ideas discussed in this thought-provoking resource.

National Head Start Association. **"Adapting to Welfare Reform,"** *Children and Families* Magazine (Winter 1997). National Head Start Association, 1651 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 739-0875. This article helps programs understand welfare reform in the Head Start context and explore opportunities for addressing the challenges it creates. The community needs assessment is stressed as an important tool for programs as they engage in and build on partnerships that support families.

Precure, Agnes. ***Learning Faster, Learning Smarter: The Functional Context Education Approach to Economic Self-Sufficiency*** (1997). Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), 815 15th Street, NW, Suite 916, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 638-3143. 84 pgs., $30. This manual describes the approach that WOW has used for many years to improve educational and employment opportunities for women. WOW's "functional context education approach" is an instructional strategy that "combines literacy skills with motivational content such as job training, parenting and life skills." WOW has demonstrated tremendous success with the approach and profiles eleven programs that use it from around the country. Four reasons for transforming traditional approaches to economic self-sufficiency are discussed along with pointers for implementing functional context education. The manual concludes with a series of ten education lessons and lesson plan guidelines.

Six Strategies for Self-Sufficiency — Great Ideas for Using State Policy to Get Families Out of Poverty (1997). Also available from WOW. 114 pgs., $30. This valuable "idea book" is targeted to activist-oriented community organizations and public policy advocates. It is intended to provoke thought and action as well as offer hope to those dedicated individuals who work on behalf of families in poverty. This resource provides insights into six solid strategies. These strategies are: The Self-Sufficiency Standard; Targeting High-Wage Jobs; Integrating Literacy with Employment Skills; Education and Training for Nontraditional Employment; Microenterprise Development; and the Individual Development Account. Resources and support organizations are listed after each strategy.

Vanzant, Iyanla. ***The Value in the Valley*** (1995). Fireside, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. 318 pgs., $12, available from local bookstores. Initially written as a guide for African American women, this resource offers valuable lessons for all interested in living a more complete life. The author explores the many valleys in life, including: the valley of courage, the valley of knowledge and wisdom, the valley of success and the valley of love. The author shares her own experiences as well as those of countless others.

Programs should also be aware of and subscribe to non-traditional resources such as magazines. Recent issues of *Ebony*, *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic* magazines have included many articles on self-sufficiency themes and success stories, which staff may want to share with parents.

Resources

Organizations

There are many organizations as well as federal, state and local agencies that are developing materials for those needing to stay abreast of welfare-to-work issues. Some of the organizations and agencies contacted in the development of this guide include the following:

Center on Education and Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 946 Educational Sciences Building, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706-1796. 1-800-446-0399. This Center has devoted years of research and development focusing on school-to-work, career development and adult career planning. Its catalog offers a complete listing of materials targeted at various age groups. Catalog listings include: Employability Skills, Career Planning, and Job Information. The catalog also lists conferences, workshops and technical assistance available through the Center.

Channing L. Bete Co., Inc., 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 03173-0200, 1-800-628-7733. This company has available a number of brief, well-written scriptographic (illustrated, simple text) guides to successful career and personal development. Titles include *Developing Workplace Skills, Your Resume: Key to a Successful Job Search, Landing a Job, Tips for a Successful Job Search, Job Interview Skills* and many others.

Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 662-3593 or 662-3697. One of the major advocate organizations on behalf of children. An active opponent of the legislation leading to federal welfare reform, CDF is sure to be active in keeping Congress aware of the implementation issues concerning welfare-to-work and the impact on children.

Families and Work Institute, 330 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001. (212) 465-2044. This non-profit organization addresses the changing nature of work and family life. The institute focuses on identifying emerging work-life issues, bench marking solutions to work life problems and evaluating the impact of solutions on employees, families and communities. A major initiative is its Fatherhood Project.

National Head Start Association, 1651 Prince Street, Alexandria, Va 22314, 703-739-0875. The major advocate organization for Head Start programs and individuals working in Head Start. NHSA offers training, resources, advocacy and information as well as special initiatives on partnerships and The Workplace Helpline.

National Self-Help Clearinghouse, 25 W. 43rd St., Rm. 620, New York, NY 10036, (212) 354-8525. This Clearinghouse offers resources to self-help support groups and referrals to regional support groups.

Project Match/Families in Transition Association, Erickson Institute. 420 North Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, (312)755-2250. This program has a dual mission: 1) to design and implement welfare-to-work initiatives that help participants achieve economic and social stability through customized placement and supportive services; and 2) to document lessons about the process of leaving welfare and disseminate them to policymakers and practitioners. Recent publications include: *Bridging the Worlds of Head Start and Welfare to Work: Building A Two Generation Self-Sufficiency Program from the Ground Up* and *Making the Shoe Fit: Creating a Work-Prep System for Large and Diverse Welfare Populations.*

Welfare Information Network, 1341 G. St., NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 628-5790. A clearinghouse for information, policy analysis and technical assistance on welfare reform.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics, Rm 4675, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20212, (202) 606-6378. This federal agency tracks employment and career fields in terms of occupations and career needs. Key recent publications include: *Hiring Welfare-to-Work Employees* and *Hot Jobs for the Twenty- First Century.*

Note: Head Start programs should keep in contact with each other in order to share information on welfare reform and economic self-sufficiency strategies. The Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Network is also a source of information.

Appendix A:
Project Match's Incremental Ladder to Economic Independence

There are three groups of work-prep activities that Project Match has created for the hard-to-serve — volunteer activities, activities with children, and self-improvement activities — but before we discuss each of these groups it is important to briefly describe the larger model in which they are embedded, which we call the Incremental Ladder to Economic Independence (see the figure on the following page).

Besides these three groups of new activities, the Incremental Ladder includes education/training activities and employment. With this broad array of activities, *there is a place on the Ladder for every single welfare recipient*, from the most to the least job-ready.

Underlying this welfare-to-work model is a developmental approach; thus, the *different activities are arranged on the Ladder so that they are progressively more demanding*. On each rung there is an increase in skills, competencies, and expectations that builds on those already developed; there is also a gradually increasing time commitment as people move up the Ladder.

Another feature of the Ladder is that it *establishes discrete incremental benchmarks to measure progress*. Its numerous activities and levels of time commitment create a series of intermediate steps that serve as indicators of achievement to sustain participants as they struggle toward the upper rungs. (These benchmarks also serve as outcome measures to ensure program accountability.)

At Project Match, we *use the Ladder to help participants develop natural pathways to self-sufficiency*. The Ladder helps staff and participants to consider their alternatives at each step by laying out a variety of options. Not only can people move up and down the Ladder, but they can move sideways or diagonally.

As mentioned earlier, a common natural pathway at Project Match is for people to enter the program and start working at either part-time or full-time jobs. Many just keep moving up the Ladder, while others at some point straddle employment and education rungs. The time frame for each participant is different and the Ladder can accommodate this variation as well.

In short, *the Ladder embodies the characteristics that make for a high-flexibility program*: there is flexibility around scheduling of hours in activities, around duration of activities, and sequencing and combining. Attention to transitions is also inherent in the Ladder model.

The Incremental Ladder to Economic Independence

Activities with Children	Volunteering/ Advisory Boards (Community Service)	Employment	Education/Training Activities	Self-Improvement Activities
		Unsubsidized Jobs 40 Hours/Week (Over $6.00/Hour, Benefits) Over 5 Years 4-5 Years 1-3 Years		
		Unsubsidized Jobs 40 Hours/Week ($6.00/Hour or Less) Over 1 Year 7-12 Months 4-6 Months 0-3 Months		
	Scheduled Hours 20 Hours/Week or More	Unsubsidized Jobs 20 Hours/Week or More	20 Hours/Week or More	
	Outside Community (e.g., Hospitals) In Community (e.g., Child's School)	7-12 Months 4-6 Months 0-3 Months	College Vocational Training High School ABE/GED	
5 Hours/Week or More	Scheduled Hours 11–19 Hours/Week	Unsubsidized Jobs Less Than 20 Hours/Week	11-19 Hours/Week	5 Hours/Week or More
Community Activities (e.g., Scout Leader, Coach) School-based Activities (e.g., Homeroom Mother) Other Activities (e.g., Museums)	Outside Community (e.g., National Organizations) In Community (e.g., Church)	7-12 Months 4-6 Months 0-3 Months	College Vocational Training ABE/GED Literacy	Crafts/Sewing Exercise Class/Aerobics Substance Abuse Treatment
3-4 Hours/Week	Scheduled Hours 1-10 Hours/Week	Subsidized Work	5-10 Hours/Week	3-4 Hours/Week
Family Literacy Programs Family Support Programs (e.g., Parenting Education Class, Drop-in Center)	Local School Council Tenant Management Board Child's School Head Start	On-the-Job Training Work Supplementation Work Experience (CWEP)	ABE/GED Literacy	Crafts/Sewing Exercise Class/Aerobics Substance Abuse Treatment
1-2 Hours/Week	Unscheduled Hours	Internships with Stipends	1-4 Hours/Week	1-2 Hours/Week
Act on Referrals in a Timely Manner Take Child to Extracurricular Activities Regularly Get Child to School on Time	Local School Council Tenant Management Board Child's School Head Start	Structured Activities w/ Stipends (e.g., WIC Clerk, Head Start Aide) 7-12 Months 4-6 Months 0-3 Months	ABE/GED Literacy	Family Counseling Individual Counseling Parenting Classes

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Appendix B:
A Community Framework For Head Start

Overview

This is a framework for Head Start programming which emphasizes family involvement in community life, both within the local Head Start center and in the broader community.

This framework has its conceptual roots in the community-building writings of John Gardner, Amitai Etzioni and John McKnight. It approaches families from a vantage point of strengths, rather than deficiencies, and is consistent with "prevention" models. It also reflects Head Start's early program emphasis on community mobilization and "maximum feasible parent participation."

We believe Head Start's work with families must include:

- Bringing isolated families together in community.
- Building the capacity of families to effectively meet shared needs and to bring about change in their neighborhoods and communities.
- Engaging families in broader circles of community life.

This is a framework which views Head Start families as active members of communities, not deficient clients in a service system.

Why Is A Community Framework Needed?

- Low-income families are cast in passive "client" roles by many public programs. They may receive a range of services, but often have little sense of belonging or being valued by their community.
- When we fail to build or reinforce healthy community life, negative "community" can develop around drugs, gangs and crime.
- Families need to be part of a web of supportive relationships with other families, individuals and groups. They need to being to community structures that utilize their skills and value their involvement.
- Neighborhoods need active groups of local citizens working toward change. Similarly, individuals and families need avenues of involvement in their communities.
- Head Start can have a greater impact on children and families, if general neighborhood life is not heavily influenced by drugs, gangs or violence.

Appendix B (Continued)

Prevailing Assumptions

The community framework stands in contrast to prevailing assumption we've held that low-income families simply need more or better professional services from public programs. This assumption underestimates:

- The human need for active community life.
- The degree to which grassroots community structures have declined in America over the last 30 years.
- The cumulative effect on families of multiple "client" roles with large public institutions.

While improved and better-coordinated services are crucial to success with families, "community services" are different from "community life." Families need both, and Head Start is uniquely structured to respond to both types of need.

Goals Of A Community Framework

1. To develop a strong sense of community and mutual support among families at local Head Start centers.
2. To establish processes which encourage local Head Start families to take responsible group action around neighborhood problems or other shared needs.
3. To expand families' social networks through active involvement with grassroots membership-based organizations (churches, cultural groups, ethnic association, youth groups, etc.)

Appendix B (Continued)

Implementation Strategies For A Community Framework

Strategy #1: Conduct Community-Building Activities within Local Head Start Centers

a) Offer initial activities which help families to form positive relationships with each other. Examples include potluck, center work parties and "parents' night out" sessions. Families need to feel a positive bond with one another, before becoming involved in deeper types of mutual support.

b) Establish "Skill/Resource Exchanges" at local centers (with a notebook or a simple computer database) that identify tools, materials, skills, and expertise possessed by members of the center. This enables families to turn to one another for practical types of support. It also emphasizes family strengths and resources, rather than deficiencies.

c) As a program, identify additional areas of decision-making that can responsibly be delegated to local parent groups, so that there are real issues for groups to form around. If parent groups are formed well in advance of fall start-up, the local group could be involved in selecting the program model to be used, in handling budget issues, and in planning initial center activities.

d) Provide special recognition to Head Start members who are "community-builders." These family members may not always be volunteers directly for Head Start; they may be involved with other families in the skill exchange or active in a neighborhood improvement effort.

Strategy #2: Conduct Community Needs Assessments at the Center Level and Promote Center Action Plans

Conduct a center survey that will give local parent groups an overview of shared needs and interests, around which they can take constructive action. Such a survey can include items related to GEDs, affordable housing, employment, neighborhood crime, health coverage, child care, educational training, substance abuse, food resources and legal assistance. The survey should focus on need areas around which a group of families could legitimately organize to take constructive action.

The parent group will use the results of the survey as a basis for developing a "center action plan" that will address high priority survey items. The action plan should propose activities using existing resources, as well as activities needing additional resources which the local group requests from the Head Start policy council.

Head Start's current processes for family and community assessments do not give local parent groups routine feedback on the needs which families within a center have in common. Consequently, as a group parents do not have information that could be helpful to them in discussing and organizing around common needs. When systems for addressing needs are totally individualized, families lose the extra momentum and support that comes from a group effort.

Appendix B (Continued)

Strategy #3: Offer Practical Group Solutions to Needs of Working Families

Significant involvement with Head Start parents who are working or attending school might best be achieved through group activities that meet day-to-day family needs. This approach would make a full-day Head Start center available some evenings and weekends for use by families who are members of the center. Full-day centers should examine the possibility of serving an early evening meal at 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. (This was done in some child care centers for working mothers during World War II.)

Laundry facilities often become an informal gathering point where families would get to know each other. Parents in full-day Head Start programs may find it helpful for the center to have one or two washers and dryers available for their use.

Student families may be interested in starting an "evening care coop" one or two nights a week. Members of the coop could take turns providing child care so that each had time to study. Full-day centers could also create an area for parents to study or to use a computer for class. With a constantly changing job market it would be helpful for full-day Head Start sites to have "job clubs" and employment bulletin boards for sharing leads on new or better jobs.

Strategy #4: Develop Community Involvement Directories and Activities

In order to reduce family isolation and expand families' social networks, each local Head Start center should have a directory for families of grassroots membership-based community organizations including churches, art/cultural groups, ethnic associations, neighborhood associations, youth groups and interest clubs. Head Start staff can encourage families to seek out community groups that match their interests and perspective. In addition to individual contact, parent groups may choose to visit organizations or to invite someone from a group to speak.

This approach is consistent with Head Start's multi-cultural philosophy as it can put families in touch with community groups that promote a special appreciation for specific ethnic/cultural roots and with other organizations that cross cultural lines.

These community groups are distinct from "community services," due to the fact that they involve families as members, they utilize the skills of their membership to maintain the organization, and they do not categorize families by income or deficiency. This does not diminish the importance and the need for "community services"; it simply recognizes that there are specific types of human growth and human need which grassroots community organizations are especially well-suited to address.

This sector of the community has the potential to provide significant social support to families and to meet the basic human need to "belong" and to be needed by others. Supportive relationship often grow out of participation in community organizations. Head Start itself provides a sense of "belonging" for many parents, which they miss when they leave the program. As we look at transition of children to public schools, we should also look at transition of families into wider circles of community life.

Appendix B (Continued)

Strategy #5: Establish A Community Involvement Advisory Committee

A community involvement advisory committee should be established at the grantee level to foster an atmosphere of inclusion for low-income families among grassroots community organizations. This local committee can address barriers to family participation in community organizations, effective outreach, and welcoming of families. To insure that the family perspective is considered, Head Start parents should also be included on the committee. In most areas of the country Head Start draws families from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. The community-involvement advisory committee should represent this diversity, and may be able to increase communication between diverse groups in the community.

Strategy # 6: Include Past Head Start Families in Center Community Activities

A family's involvement in community activities at a Head Start center does not have to automatically end when their child leaves Head Start. Since this involvement is informal in nature and doesn't require funding, families should feel comfortable coming to potlucks or participating in neighborhood improvement efforts sponsored by Head Start even after officially leaving the program. A certain amount of continued involvement by former Head Start parents can be helpful to a new group of parents in getting organized.

Strategy #7: Examine Staff Roles and the Need for Staff Development

Community-building in Head Start requires some new staff skills in order to be supportive of group efforts. Staff should be able to provide expertise in initial group formation, consensus decision-making, conflict resolution and activity planning. Staff should also serve as role models for the types of supportive relationships which parents are encouraged to develop with each other.

Strategy #8: Development of A Head Start Model that Does Not Cluster Families by Income

In addition to existing models of Head Start operation, we need to have a service option which does not cluster families by income. This most easily could involve cooperative ventures between Head Start and existing community early childhood programs. In these arrangements, classroom services which meet Head Start Performance Standards can be provided by the community early childhood program through a service contract, and the Head Start grantee can directly provide other key component services (health, social services, etc.) needed by Head Start families. This model would result in families and children of varying income levels routinely interacting.

Appendix B (Continued)

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the National Head Start Advisory Committee:

- Establish a task force to further explore a community framework for Head Start, with representation from Head Start programs, family support researchers and national organizations that represent grassroots community organizations.
- Fund a wave of Head Start demonstration projects to determine the effectiveness of a community framework in enhancing general family functioning, substance abuses prevention, parent involvement, and positive neighborhood outcomes.
- Examine the potential relationship between this framework and Head Start Family Service Centers.

Conclusion

In a recent Chicago Tribune architectural contest to redesign the Cabrini Green public housing complex, the newspaper noted that architects have two basic responsibilities in design work: to provide shelter and to create community. Public policy makers have a similar responsibility to create community in designing public programs.

In planning Head Start's future, we must consciously create program structures that encourage a strong community life for all families.

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Appendix C: Summary of Federal Welfare Reform

Federal welfare reform was enacted in 1996 and created a program called TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). TANF replaced the program known as AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). Here are some key points about how the TANF program works.

Federal Funding

States receive a block grant (a fixed amount of money) for family assistance. This means that the grant amount does not change even if the number of families that need assistance is more or less than expected.

State Leeway

States have some flexibility in the rules and benefit amounts for their TANF programs. This means that each state may run its TANF program somewhat differently.

Time Limits

There is a lifetime limit of five years for how long families may receive federal cash assistance through the TANF program (a state may excuse some of its caseload from this rule). States can choose to shorten this time limit or to make exceptions to this rule.

Work Requirements

TANF participants must be working within two years (there are some exceptions to this rule). Work is defined to include: subsidized or unsubsidized employment, on-the-job training, community service, vocational training, or job searching. Persons who provide child care for other TANF participants also meet the work requirements. For heads of household age 19 or younger, attending secondary school also counts as work.

The number of hours that TANF participants must work is 30 hours per week for single parents and 35 hours per week for persons in two-parent families.

Unemployed persons receiving federal aid must participate in community service within two months of receiving aid (States may choose not to impose this rule.)

Appendix C (Continued)

Child Care

The federal government has increased the amount of money it provides for child care for parents in the TANF program who are moving into work.

States must use a portion of their child care funds for educating parents about their child care choices and for improving the quality and availability of child care.

Single parents with children under age 6 who cannot find child care may not be penalized for failure to engage in work activities.

Child Support

States are required to improve their enforcement of child support orders.

Minor Parents

Unmarried minor parents in the TANF program must live with an adult or in an adult-supervised setting. Teen parents must participate in educational and training activities if their child is 12 weeks or older.

Food Stamps

Childless, non-disabled persons 18-50 may receive food stamps for only three months total in a three-year period, unless working or in training at least 20 hours/week.

Immigrants

With some exceptions, legal immigrants are not eligible for Social Security Income (SSI) and food stamps. States have the option of providing medical care for immigrants who were in the country before the TANF program was started (in 1996) and/or elderly or disabled immigrants who have lost eligibility for Social Security Income (SSI).

Legal immigrants new to this country since TANF are not eligible for means-tested federal benefits for five years. Illegal aliens and legal non-immigrants are not eligible for most federal benefits. All immigrants are eligible for federal education programs at the presecondary, elementary and secondary school levels (including ESEA, ESL and adult education).

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